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Select Northfield Sermons

BY

Robt. E. Speer, H. W. Webb-Peploe,
Andrew Murray, A. J. Gordon
and others



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THE LAND OF PROMISE.

By Prof. W. W. Moore.

The Jew is the miracle of history. The land of the Jew is the marvel of geography. Palestine is absolutely unique in its location, its structure, and its historical interest. No other country in the world can even dispute this pre-eminence. Other portions of the globe have indeed their peculiar claims upon the interest both of explorers for science and of tourists for pleasure. But the chief interest of mankind centers not at the frozen pole with its perpetual fascination of mystery, nor in the blooming tropics with their endless succession of summer, nor in the classic soil of Greece, or Italy, or Egypt, but in a narrow and homely strip of mountain land which lies at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea, whose soil is strewn with ruins and whose people have groaned for ages under alien oppression. What is the reason for this unexampled interest?

A knowledge of the physical features of this land has for students of Scripture a threefold value: for illustration, for explanation, for confirmation.

I.

By the value of a knowledge of sacred geography for *illustration* we mean that as "the history of Israel was

fashioned to be typical of the history of redemption," so the scenes of that history have acquired a *spiritual significance* and are associated the world over with the various phases of Christian experience.

Egypt, the land of bondage, Sinai, the land of training, and Canaan, the land of promise, are typical to all men of slavery to sin, of the disciplinary journey of life, and of the heavenly inheritance of God's people. The local features of these lands "have naturally become the household imagery of Christendom," have greatly enriched our religious nomenclature, and have deeply colored our sacred songs. Take for example a single familiar hymn, and observe the constant reference to the incidents of Israel's journey from Egypt to Palestine, the wilderness, the manna, the miraculous supply of water, the pillar of cloud and of fire, the crossing of the Jordan, and the arrival in Canaan:

- "Guide me, () Thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but Thou art mighty,
Hold me with Thy powerful hand;
Bread of Heaven,
Feed me, till I want no more!
- "Open now the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing streams do flow;
Let the fiery, cloudy pillar,
Lead me all my journey through:
Strong Deliverer,
Be Thou still my strength and shield.
- "When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;

Death of death, and hell's destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan's side:
Songs of praises,
I will ever give to Thee."

II.

The explanation of the Holy Scriptures. The Bible, like every other genuine book, reflects the character of the country in which it is written and the customs of the people among whom it arose. Therefore, to learn the land and the life of Palestine is to apprehend the whole setting of revealed truth, and to appreciate the force of a multitude of metaphors and allusions which would otherwise be without meaning.

How shall we understand the suddenness and severity of the storms which according to the Gospel history swept the Sea of Galilee unless we have read of those ravines in the east down which the wind is forced like water through the nozzle of a hose, thus smiting the surface of the lake with tremendous power? In the parable of the good Samaritan we read that "a certain man went *down* from Jerusalem to Jericho." Although these cities are but seventeen miles apart there is from one to the other "the immense descent of more than three thousand feet," so that all travelers from one to the other did literally and emphatically go down.

How shall we appreciate the faith exercised by Israel in the conquest of Canaan unless we remember not only that without boats or bridges they were commanded to cross a swift and swollen stream which was then overflowing all its banks, not only that they were com-

manded to capture an apparently impregnable city without any of the usual appliances for storming such fortifications, but also that after the fall of Jericho they were still in a position of great peril, having gained only a narrow strip of indefensible plain, and being confronted on the west with a sheer wall of rock twelve hundred feet high, a veritable Gibraltar, held by their enemies? This mighty rampart of rock is here and there cleft to its base by wild ravines, through which alone the interior was accessible, so that humanly speaking the conquest of these uplands was still an impossibility. The task was one that made a heavy demand upon their faith in the Almighty.

How shall we understand that battle of the gods on Carmel where Elijah stood single handed for Jehovah against the four hundred and fifty priests of Baal, unless we remember this central mountain afforded to the multitude who that day thronged its sides and summit a twofold view which made it the fittest of all stages for such a drama?

“As they looked westward and northward,” says Dr. Robinson, “they could see the Mediterranean dotted with the merchant ships of Tyre and Sidon—the grand strongholds of Baal. As they looked eastward and southward, yonder may be descried, far off, the Sea of Galilee; as the eye sweeps to the southward, the plain of Jezreel, and Mount Tabor shooting up out of it; and, southward still, Ramoth Gilead and Mount Ebal and Gerizim and Shechem and Shiloh; a hundred tops and villages, around which hang a thousand hallowed

associations and memories of the marvelous power and loving-kindness of Jehovah to their fathers. Thus they stand as with two immense maps unrolled at their feet; on the one side the map of the kingdom of Baal, on the other side, of the kingdom of Jehovah."

This then was the place of all places where the contest between these two could be most properly decided.

In the Sermon on the Mount we read of a man who lost all by building his house upon the sand, and of another who digged deep and laid a foundation "upon *the rock*," says the Revised Version, *i. e.*, he digged down to the bed-rock of limestone which underlies all Palestine. Hence his security — no storm could disturb *that* foundation.

III.

Such a knowledge of Palestine also *confirms the truth of the Bible*.

Sacred geography has an apologetic value. It throws up an impregnable bulwark against some of the most formidable assaults of modern unbelief. I believe that much of the slovenly skepticism of our time is due to failure to learn the facts in regard to the geographical and historical framework of the gospel. Some men have so long accustomed themselves to reading the Scripture as they read heathen mythology, with no attempt to fix the events in place and time, that they have almost insensibly come to regard the Biblical histories as myths also.

Thorough study of the physical features of Palestine

will discover to us intimate and supremely important relations between the Land, the People, and the Book — will deepen and confirm our conviction that whoever wrote the Book built the Land, and that the God of Israel is the Savior of the world. When Frederick the Great asked one of his chaplains to give him a proof of Christianity in a single word, the answer was:

“Israel, your majesty.”

Had he asked for two, the chaplain might well have added Palestine itself as another. The Land, the People, and the Book constitute a trinity of truth, and the testimony of each is strengthened by that of the other two; nor can either be fully understood apart from the others.

Now let me try to prove that the country was

“PRECONFIGURED TO ITS HISTORY,”

— to show that by its location and structure Palestine was adapted as no other country on earth was to God’s purpose of preparing a pure religion through centuries of preparation and training, and then of publishing that religion to the whole world.

In order to the accomplishment of these great ends three things were necessary under the conditions which obtained after the Fall and the Flood:

1. A single nation had to be chosen as the special depositary of divine truth, and this nation had to be separated from all other nations in order that this truth might be preserved and developed in its purity, uncontaminated by “the foul and degrading polytheism of the heathen world.”

2. This nation had to be set in the center of the world so that when the fulness of the time was come the saving truth which it possessed might be most easily published to all mankind, thus evincing that Israel had been secluded not merely for its own sake but for the sake of the whole world.

3. The record of this truth thus prepared and published had to be such as would fit it for world-wide dissemination; that is to say, the book which contained this revelation had to be a universal book, not local or sectional, but possessing such a range of imagery and style as would make it easily understood by men of every race in every land.

Now Palestine was the only country on the globe that could comply with these conditions, being singularly secluded from all other lands, and yet occupying the most central position among the nations of antiquity, and at the same time possessing the extraordinary range of climate and products and pursuits which were requisite to fit it for the production of the world's book. Palestine then was *isolated, central and cosmopolitan*.

THE ISOLATION OF PALESTINE

was secured by physical features which have absolutely no parallel on earth. By natural barriers of desert, river, sea, and mountain, it was cut off to a rare degree from the outside world. It has been said that "the theocratic idea formed a perfect cordon around Canaan, and effectually separated all other nations from the chosen people which inhabited it." As a consequence

of this seclusion the mercantile, poetical, and religious views of the Israelites were quite different from those of their neighbors. But this theocratic idea was realized largely through geographical conditions. "Palestine was from the very outset a land set apart." He whose view commands the whole course of history fashioned this country from the beginning for the part it was to play in the redemption of the world. To use His own figure, He prepared it as the vineyard in which He would plant His choicest vine, and "fenced it" with natural fortifications, and "hedged it round about" with tower and trench, sea and desert, against the "boards of the wood" and "the beast of the field."

It was separated from the great empires of the Tigris-Euphrates basin on the *east* by a broad and impassable desert. When Abram came from Ur of the Chaldees to Canaan, he had to pass round this desert, making a detour of at least a thousand miles. Alexander the Great even could not penetrate this deadly waste of sand, and when leading his victorious army from Egypt to Babylon, he, too, was compelled to march all that weary distance to the north. Nor was this all. Without this "exterior rampart" of desert lay a moat such as never surrounded castle wall — the tremendous gorge of the Jordan — the greatest depression on the surface of the earth, at the bottom of which rushed a wild and dangerous river, shut in on either side by mighty walls of rock. Thus was Palestine protected on the east.

On the *south* it was separated from Egypt, the other chief empire of antiquity, by that "great and terrible

wilderness," across which the traveler goes at the peril of his life, and whose arid wastes stretched all the way from the valley of the Nile to the hills of Judea.

The Mediterranean Sea on the *west* secured the land against intrusion from that quarter. To us the sea is a thoroughfare; to the ancients it was a mystery and a terror. In that early time, when navigation was in its infancy, the sea was regarded as a barrier. Furthermore, the coast of Palestine itself constituted an additional barrier, for unlike those of upper Syria, Asia Minor, and Greece, it had no marked indentations, no deep harbors, no great rivers, to invite sea-farers, and shelter ships. Therefore this long line of sand, broken only by the bay of Acre, and that too shallow and exposed for safety, was a wall of defence to Israel on the west.

On the *north* it was shut in by the lofty ranges of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, and by the tremendous chasm of the Leontes, its only direct line of connection with the outer world being the long, narrow valley of Coele-Syria.

In view of these facts, "there is no other land, we may well affirm, in which the purpose of God to separate a people unto Himself and make them the guardians of His truth could have been so perfectly carried out." Severed on all sides from heathendom, they could pursue the knowledge of the true God, apart from the corruptions of an idolatrous civilization, and could be trained and equipped for their sublime mission to mankind as they could have been nowhere else. And so deeply did God stamp that idea of separation upon the

soul of the Jew that even after he lost the land by which that separation had been in the first instance secured, he continued to stand apart from all other men; and to this day, after centuries of exile and wandering and persecution, the Jew is as distinct from the Gentile as he was the day he dwelt in his own barricaded country. Although a people without a home and a nation without a country, no race has ever preserved its identity with such persistence.

The distinction between Hebrew and Gentile began with the call of Abraham. But when that call was first given by which he was removed from the idolatry of Mesopotamia to the seclusion of Palestine, and his posterity made the special depository of divine truth, the ultimate object of this segregation was explained, viz., that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed.

Observe, in the second place, that Palestine was not only secluded but

CENTRAL,

and thus fitted for the world wide diffusion of the blessing thus prepared by isolation. It lay just at the junction of the three great continents, Europe, Asia and Africa. It was the focal point of the ancient world. There is this remarkable statement in Deut. 32: 8:

“When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the children of men, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.”

That is to say, in the providential distribution of the nations and in the divine allotment of their territories, Palestine was reserved for Israel, and the various people were grouped around this chosen center according to the sovereign will of God. That statement was made by Moses before the Hebrews had entered the promised land. Many centuries later Jehovah, speaking through Ezekiel, said:

"This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her."

This was the passage that gave rise to the Rabbinical fancy that Jerusalem was the actual center of the earth. In the church of the Holy Sepulchre is a large, round stone which is supposed to mark the middle point of the world, and is still devoutly kissed by thousands of pilgrims of the Greek church. However foolish this fancy may appear to us, "there was a real truth in it at the time," for Palestine did stand in the very midst of the nations of antiquity, having Egypt on the south, Babylonia, Assyria, and Persia on the east, and Greece and Rome on the west. It lay at the confluence of those currents of civilization. It was therefore fitted as no other land on earth was to be the radiating center of universal religion.

But the world-wide diffusion of the gospel had to be effected chiefly by means of a written record. That record, in order to the fulfilment of its catholic mission, must not only speak to the universal heart of man by its essential truth, but must also have such characteristics of external form as would adapt it to the ready

understanding of all men in all lands. This country was not only isolated, not only central, but also

COSMOPOLITAN BEYOND ANY OTHER LAND ON THE EARTH.

It possessed the peculiarities of all latitudes, however diverse. To appreciate this fact aright we must emphasize the littleness of the land. Its greatest length from north to south is about one hundred and forty miles, and its average breadth about forty miles. The total area is about twelve thousand square miles. The United States could be cut up into three hundred countries as large as the Holy Land, and yet America has never exercised an influence equal to a thousandth part of that which has emanated from this diminutive territory of western Asia. Spiritual forces cannot be estimated by physical bulk.

"It is very instructive," says Dr. Geikie, "to observe the relative disproportion between the influences which have most affected the world and the centers from which they have sprung." "Greece, the mother of philosophy and art, for all time, is not quite the size of Scotland; Rome, the mighty mistress of the world, was only a city of Italy"; Great Britain is but a speck on the map of the world, but she owns one-fifth of all the land and rules one-fourth of all the people on the globe. So Palestine is but a pin-point on the surface of the earth, but she has influenced humanity more profoundly and beneficently than all the other countries combined.

But small as Palestine is, still, in diversity of surface,

range of climate, and variety of products, it has absolutely no parallel. It is the supreme instance of *multum in parvo*, a veritable microcosm, a perfect world in miniature. Its climate embraces every gradation of temperature, from the cold which crowns Mt. Hermon with perpetual snow, to the torrid heat of the Jordan valley. As some one has said, "Palestine wears winter on her head, spring on her shoulders, summer in her bosom, and the riches of autumn lie scattered at her feet." This wide range of climate "secured that the revelation which was to go forth from Palestine to the whole world would embody a range of natural experiences which would fit it for all countries and populations; for its imagery and modes of thought must necessarily be colored by its composition in a land which was, in effect, an epitome of the habitable world."

Palestine consists of four strips of territory running parallel to each other north and south. These four longitudinal belts are all quite distinct, each having strongly marked peculiarities. Two of these strips are elevations and two of them depressions, and the elevations and depressions alternate from west to east.

(1) The maritime plain has a coast line of ninety miles with no good harbors, the few possible landing places, like Joppa and Acre, being inconvenient and even dangerous. The promontory of Carmel cuts across it in the north, overlooking the sea at an elevation of six hundred feet. But, with this exception, the surface is uniform, being everywhere level or gently rolling, while the soil is free from stone, and of the most ex-

uberant fertility. You have only to "tickle it with a hoe and it will laugh a harvest." The Philistine plain has always been one immense wheatfield, undivided by fences or hedges, so that when Samson sent down his three hundred jackals with their tail-tied firebrands into the standing grain, he inflicted upon the Philistines nothing short of a national calamity, since he destroyed at a single stroke not the crop of an individual farmer merely, but the food supply of the whole people. This plain is in every age the natural granary of Syria.

(2) The next parallel section of Palestine is a high-land strip, twenty-five miles wide, which constitutes the backbone of the country and includes more places of historic interest than all the others; such as Nazareth, Samaria, Shechem, Shiloh, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Hebron.

The northern part of this mountain region is heavily timbered, and the ridges are interspersed with fertile plains which, when cultivated, yield enormous crops of grain. The largest of these upland plains is Esdraelon, across which ran the great caravan and military roads, and which therefore became the battlefield of nations. Here the victories of Deborah and Gideon were gained. Here Saul fell before the Philistines, and Josiah before Pharaoh Necho. Here the Crusaders sustained their last crushing defeat, and here the soldiers of the first Napoleon fought the Turks.

South of Esdraelon stretches the middle portion of the western uplands, a picturesque and well-watered region with fewer and smaller plains for the cultivation

of wheat, but with rich glens and hillsides, where olives abound and all kinds of orchards. Still farther south lies the hill country of Judea, which produces the finest grapes in the world. To the southeast lies the wilderness of Judah, whose savage cliffs and naked ravines are "absolutely desolate, without trees, or grass, or stream, or fountain." This central ridge is swept for the most part by refreshing winds. The climate is temperate. Light snows sometimes fall in winter but speedily disappear. In summer the days are not oppressive, and the nights are cool.

(3) The third national division of Palestine is the enormous longitudinal chasm through which rushes that tortuous and turbulent river, which in a course of only one hundred and thirty-six miles (as the crow flies) falls more than three thousand feet, and which was therefore well called the *Jordan*, that is, the *descender*. Its source in the mountains is seventeen hundred feet above the level of the sea; at the Lake of Galilee it is seven hundred feet *below* the Mediterranean; and at the Dead Sea it is thirteen hundred feet below, that briny lake being the most depressed body of water on the surface of the earth. The average width of the Jordan valley is about eight miles, and its unparalleled depression, combined with the fact that it is shut in on either side with walls of rock, gives it a climate like that of the torrid zone, so that here we find the flora and fauna of the tropics.

(4) The fourth of the longitudinal strips is the eastern tableland, a plateau some three thousand feet

above the level of the sea, made up of wooded hills alternating with grassy plains, a beautiful region with a rich black soil, the chosen home of the great pastoral tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh. Had all Israel remained east of the Jordan the nation could never have served God's purpose in the economy of redemption. A nomadic people living in tents and occupied exclusively with cattle-raising cannot develop a high and permanent type of civilization. God's wisdom therefore assigned to the main body of Israel their inheritance west of the Jordan, where the very characteristics of the country would make them an agricultural rather than a pastoral people, where they would become established and identified with the soil, instead of wandering from place to place, and where they would develop fixed institutions and a stable civilization. Nevertheless, the pastoral features of the eastern plateau were necessary to the completeness of Palestine as a miniature world, and to the fulfilment of the universal destiny of the Bible. For it was to speak to shepherds as well as to the farmers and vine-dressers and sea-farers and merchants.

Now, such a country as we have described can not be found anywhere else on the globe. The wonderful diversities of surface, ranging from Mt. Hermon, ten thousand feet above the Mediterranean, to the Dead Sea, thirteen hundred feet below; the corresponding differences of climate, from Alpine cold to torrid heat; the amazing variety of animal and vegetable life belonging to every zone;—in short, the natural features of all

lands brought together within the narrow limits of one land, one hundred and forty miles long by forty miles wide—assuredly this must be reckoned one of the most wonderful characteristics of this wonderful country. It is the world in a nutshell. “Accordingly, the illustrations drawn from nature, with which the Bible abounds, are suited to all climes and understood by all men.” The Eskimo and the Hottentot, the Korean and the Spaniard, the Englishman and the Egyptian, the American and the Arab, are all at home amid imagery of Scripture. It is

THE WORLD’S BOOK.

“The literature of a country,” says Geikie, “necessarily takes the color of its local scenery and external nature, and hence a book written in almost any country is unfitted for other countries in which life and nature are different.”

The Koran, for instance, notwithstanding its fascination for the Arab, is as dry to the European as the desert in which it was written. But it is not so with the Bible, for it possesses a perennial freshness and interest for all men in every part of the world.

This cosmopolitan character of Palestine subserved another very important purpose of God—a purpose that possesses the profoundest interest for the American people, and indeed for all who believe in the great cause of popular government and human rights. The oriental idea of government, with a single shining exception, has always been this—that the people existed

for the glory of the ruler: the king was everything, the people nothing. *Our* idea of government is entirely different - we hold that the ruler exists for the good of the people. We got that idea from Palestine, from the Hebrews, from the Bible, from God. He it was who first insisted upon a reversal of the oriental theory of despotism and gave to mankind the great democratic ideal of a free government, of the people and by the people and for the people, which shall not perish from the earth. He it was who first taught the dignity of man as man, and gave to the world the conception of a commonwealth. No student of comparative history can have failed to be impressed with the world wide difference between the pompous inscriptions of Egypt and Babylon, and the simple but matchless story of the common people, which runs through the Old Testament Scriptures. On the one hand we have colossal egotism, high sounding titles, recitals of personal prowess, elaborate descriptions of royal wealth and splendor, kings, courts, wars, conquests, but not one word about the people—save, indeed, an occasional contemptuous reference to “the stinking multitude.” On the other hand we have not a favored individual but a chosen people, not a pampered despot but a royal nation, not the intrigues of kings only, but also and chiefly the everyday life of plain people; and there is throughout an unmistakable respect for mankind as such, a disregard for the merely outward and accidental, a high estimate of the spiritual and essential, a just appreciation of personal character and piety regardless of the circumstances of

birth or wealth or station. And hence arose the progressiveness of the Jew as distinguished from the immobility of other Asiatics. We are accustomed to think of the chosen people as very conservative, and so they are, in the good sense; but it is one thing to be conservative, it is another thing to be stationary. The Jews were

THE MOST PROGRESSIVE PEOPLE OF ANTIQUITY.

God gave the Hebrews a guarantee of perpetual progress when He put the welfare of the people against the tyranny both of kings and priestism, and whose continual outlook toward a golden age in the future "gave to the whole Jewish nation an upward, forward, progressive character, such as no Asiatic, no ancient, I may almost say no other nation, has ever had in the same degree."

But how were the physical features of Palestine related to the preservation and development of this modern, progressive, republican thought which lay in the mind of God and was communicated to the mind of Israel?

All students of political economy are familiar with fact that any country which has a uniformly warm climate, requiring but little outlay for clothing, and which has also a uniformly fertile soil adapted to the unlimited production of one staple, so that there is but little cost of food, is a country in which the population will increase very rapidly, and in which as a consequence there will be an over-supply of labor, resulting of course in less wages and the extreme poverty of the

great masses of the people. Moreover this inequality of wealth is inevitably accompanied by inequality of social and political power, the people remain in "a state of stupid debasement, broken by incessant misfortune, crouching before their superiors in abject submission, and only fit either to be slaves themselves or to be led to battle to make slaves of others." This is true in India, where rice yields to the laborer an average return of at least sixty bushels for one; in Egypt also, where the date fruit and dhourra grain are even more abundant and inexpensive. Diodorus Siculus, who traveled in Egypt nearly two thousand years ago, says that to bring up a child from infancy to manhood cost less than \$3.50. The result, as we have seen, was over-population, low wages, and the impoverishment and oppression of the masses. Hence there has never been in any of these lands a popular revolution. "There have been many changes, but all of them have been from above," not from below. The spirit of the people was broken.

In Palestine there were totally different conditions. Its altitudes and depressions diversified both its climate and products. There was one tropical strip, indeed, where the cost of clothing was small, and the population would have increased rapidly, but alongside of this were three temperate strips, and the climate of these was such as to necessitate more outlay for clothing and thus to check any such abnormal increase of the laboring classes as would have led to low wages and poverty.

Moreover, while the soil of Palestine was rich, its products were necessarily varied so that there was no one article so cheap and abundant as to become the natural food of the whole people. Further, as a result of this variety in climate and soil, this combination of mountain and plain, sea and lake, the *occupations* of the people also were varied, and so we find nomadic, agricultural, commercial, and sea-faring life side by side. In a word, there was a better distribution of wealth among all the people, therefore a more general diffusion of intelligence and power, a stronger national spirit, more capacity to assert the popular will against the encroachments of despotism. It is by no means an accident that all the great republics of history have arisen in countries having marked diversities of climate and variety of products. But the idea which these republics have all endeavored to realize was derived in the first instance from Palestine, so that this little land has been

THE WORLD'S TEACHER

in sound politics as well as in saving religion.

We have endeavored to show that the land of Israel is indeed a "Fifth Gospel," as it has been called, not only because it illustrates Christian experience, and explains Holy Scripture, and confirms Christian faith, but also because it evinces in its very structure, location and characteristics God's purpose of preparing and proclaiming a world-wide evangel. That land was *isolated*

because God would have His people separate, and His religion pure. That land was *central* because God meant to publish His gospel to all nations. That land was *cosmopolitan* because God wished the book which was to effect this diffusion to be readily understood by all men in all lands.

THE RELIGION OF UNSPOTTEDNESS.

By Robert E. Speer.

Men have always found it difficult to agree upon an acceptable definition of religion. Some hold that religion consists chiefly in the intellectual acceptance of certain formulated propositions, while others believe that the chief element in religion is a certain form of feeling toward God and unseen things. There is doubtless a large measure of truth in each of these two conceptions of religion, which would have to be taken into account in any attempt to formulate an exact and comprehensive statement of what religion is. But whatever truth there is in these two conceptions, the writer of the General Epistle of James wholly passes them by when he comes to define religion:

“Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father,” he says, “is this—that a man should keep himself unspotted.”

There is something else in James' definition, and a not unimportant matter, but a matter nevertheless that does not so closely concern us here; so that we can afford to pass that wholly by, and to take the words that I have quoted as containing for us the substance of James' idea of religion. True religion—the kind that passes muster with God, the sort that He will be satis-

fied with—is this: that a man should keep himself unspotted.

It is a rather startling definition of religion. Unspottedness—is that the whole of religion? James does not say that that is the whole of it, but he says that that is the core of it, and that the man who does not have that sort of religion, does not have the kind of religion that will satisfy Him who passes the only reliable judgment upon the religion of every man. And even after one has thought over James' definition of religion for a little while, and has come to see how much there is in it, it strikes him as being a very unconventional way of defining religion—some would even say a rather undignified way. Why could he not have said that religion is purity, holiness, or sanctification? For the reason that the early Christians liked to conceive of things very plainly; loved to call them by illuminating names. They were not fond of using worn-out metaphors; so they very much preferred when they spoke of things concerned in the religious life to do so newly and freshly.

UNSPOTTEDNESS.

Just this first metaphor that James uses is one of which they were specially fond. Paul tells us in one of his epistles that the church that Jesus Christ will present to Himself in that day when He comes back to wed His Bride, will be a church *without spot*. The words that close the little Epistle of Jude make up an ascription which is one of the finest of all the ascrip-

tions of the New Testament: "Unto Him that is able to guard you from stumbling, and to set you before the presence of His glory *without spot*" The second Epistle of Peter, describing a certain class of men prevalent in his day, as they are prevalent still, after a vivid description of them as men whose tastes were lustful,— "born mere animals,"—sums up the whole description by calling them "blemishes and *spots*." And the early Christians loved to speak of Jesus Christ under the same metaphor. They called Him a "Lamb without blemish and *without spot*," "Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself up to God *without spot*." When, therefore, James defined religion as consisting in spotlessness, he was only making use of a conception that was very common among Christians of his day, a conception of religion that was prevalent also in the Old Testament times.

Indeed, he was defining religion in just the way in which God for centuries had been endeavoring to get His people to view it. As I read my Old Testament, it seems to me that

THE PREDOMINANT PURPOSE OF THE LAW AND THE OLD TESTAMENT RITUAL

was to teach men the difference between cleanness and uncleanness; between spottedness and unspottedness. At the very beginning of the Levitical Law, God had called Aaron aside as the high priest of the nation, and told him plainly that one of his chief functions was to show the people that there was a distinction between

clean things and unclean things. In the very next section of the Levitical Law we are told that God took Moses and Aaron both apart and repeated the instructions that He had given to Aaron, and once again made it plain to them in fresh phraseology that one great purpose of His dealing with the people was to impress it upon the Jewish nation that there was an eternal and ineradicable distinction between the clean things and the unclean things; the things that are common and the things that are holy. Therefore He told them they must divide all animals—the clean and the unclean. He specified to them the conditions under which a fountain of water was unclean, and must not be drunk from, and the conditions under which it was clean. He specified the sanitary regulations that were to govern the camp of Israel, in order that it might be clean. “For,” He said, “the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp to deliver thee and to give up thy enemies before thee: therefore shall thy camp be holy; that He see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee.” And they were especially enjoined not to touch the unclean things; they might touch only the clean things.

To make this whole education of His more impressive, He summed it all up, focalized it, in the leper.

“The leper,” He provided, “is the embodiment of uncleanness. He is to be the symbol of unwholesomeness. His clothes shall be rent and the hair of his head shall go loose, and he shall cover his upper lip, and his cry shall be: ‘Unclean! Unclean!’

He was not to be allowed within their camps, he was

not to be allowed within their cities. And whenever walking in the public roads through the country he heard the sound of approaching steps, or the tinkle of the camel bells that marked the nearing of caravans, he should lift up his hoarse, strident voice crying:

“Unclean! Unclean!”

And it made no difference if a man said that he did not know things were unclean. He might not have known that the law was in force. He might have said:

“In the section where I live public sentiment is not quite as high as here at Jerusalem. Up in my district you can do things that you cannot do here. They regard some things that you regard as unclean here, as clean up there, and a man of high social standing, such as I am, can afford to ignore such little, petty regulations.”

It would not do. No matter how influential a man was; no matter how strong a man was; no matter what the sentiments in the community where the man lived were; no matter how ignorant he might be of God's law, God held him responsible for not knowing what was clean and what was not clean, and He let fall upon him the curse of the unclean man if he violated the laws He had given to the priests and the people. It did not matter that a man had high political influence. Naaman was the captain of the hosts of the king of Syria. The man of God treated him as if he were the vilest pauper. He did not go out to see him. He sent his servant to tell him that if he wanted to be clean he should wash seven times in the Jordan.

Now, of course, most of this was only

GOD'S KINDERGARTEN,

God's figure of speech, God's metaphor, to teach His people that there was a moral distinction, to sharpen the edge of their moral discernment; to make it plain to them that just as between natural and material things God was drawing His educative line, so between moral things there was a line of distinction that must never be passed by the man who wanted to share the cleanness of God. He meant to impress upon the people the same conception of religion which James phrased in the last verse of this first chapter of his epistle:

"Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this: that a man should keep himself unspotted; that he should free himself from that corrosive vileness which stands with its eternal spot over him."

No man in Israel who listened to the teaching of the priests of God believed that he was clean. When Paul came preaching the new evangel, he was not deceived into believing that any man was clean. He looked out over the heathen world, and he described it in those scathing terms that are recorded in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, declaring at the close of his declaration regarding the sins of the heathen that the most hideous of them all was this: that the heathen world had given up the love of the spotlessness of God, and had come to worship instead the uncleanness of flesh. And when he turned away from the heathen world to his own heart, he was not deceived. "In me,"

he said, "that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing." And often he broke forth with one of those magnificent hyperboles of which the Bible is so full: "There is none righteous; no, not one. There is none that seeketh after God. There is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one." He knew in his day, just as every honest man knows in our day, that the stain and the spot had fallen upon every soul.

It comes upon a man

FROM WITHOUT.

He takes up a book to read, any one of a thousand "good clean books," as he is told, and before he knows it he has touched a picture that has fouled his life. He goes into college and falls in with a little company of men, fair on the exterior, and before he knows it he has touched the unclean thing. We have seen, every one of us, scores and scores of times, the corrosive influence of a rotten man, an unclean, spotted man, in a crowd of clean and spotless men. His influence spreads like a prairie fire, until a hundred men are soiled with his contamination. Whichever way a man turns in this great, sad, glad world of God's, uncleanness, spottedness, pollution, touch him on every side.

And we know as well that it comes constantly upon us

FROM WITHIN.

"Let no man say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted of God'; for God Himself cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth He any man: but every man is tempt-

ed when he is drawn away of his own lusts, and enticed." Say not that the things from without corrode you. "It is not that which entereth in through the mouth that corrupts a man," says our Savior, "but the things that proceed out of the mouth, they corrupt a man; for out from the heart of man proceed evil thoughts, evil images, evil words, and evil deeds, and these are they that corrupt a man"

"Oh," cried Job centuries ago, "that a clean thing might come out of an unclean!"

Both without and within men touch tar every day.

Sometimes you may meet a man who affirms that he is spotless, clean, both deceiving himself and calling God a liar. But the holier a man is, the more spotless he is, the nearer he draws to the clear vision of the spotless God, the more ready he is to declare that his own life is foul and unclean.

I suppose David was by all odds the best man of his day, and yet it was out of David's heart that there arose the heartbreaking prayer: "Cleanse me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation! Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." I suppose Isaiah was far and away the cleanest man of his time, and yet as he stood that day in the year that King Uzziah died, in the temple, and the house was filled with smoke, and the foundations of its pillars rocked to and fro, and he heard the voices of the ser-

aphim cry: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts," the cleanest man of Israel went down into the dust, with his mouth in his hand, crying: "Woe is me; for I am undone; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." I suppose the Apostle Peter was about the cleanest man in the company of the first disciples, and yet it was he who in that day that they took the great catch of fishes, so that their net brake, fell down on the shores of the Galilean sea before the face of One whose stainless beauty he had never marked before, crying: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." If there is any man who thinks there are no stains on his life, it is only because he has never seen the vision of that stainless life.

And the holiest men hate corrosion, and shrink horror-stricken from spot, because they know most fully just what spottedness, uncleanness, foulness in a life mean. They know that these shut a man out of the vision of God and His beauty. There stood up once, centuries ago, on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, a young carpenter from Nazareth, who came to show men the Father, and among the first words that He spoke, surrounded there by the throng of peasants who had come up from all over Galilee to hear Him, were these: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they [I believe He meant they only] shall see God."

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?" cried one who went before Him, "and who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure

heart." Only he shall ever see the vision of Him of whom Habakkuk said: "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil."

And therefore the men that value the vision of God and His glory shrink back with white faced loathing from spottedness. They know that spots and uncleanness shut men out of Christ's kingdom. "Ye know of a surety," wrote Paul to the Ephesians, "that no unclean person hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." Why? Because God loves him too much to let him in without a change. I come more and more to feel that the shut gates of Paradise are one of the best evidences of the love of God, that He has provided the outer darkness for men who would not be happy elsewhere; for men who have so corroded and rotted their lives, that only an age-long abode of corrosion will be a satisfactory home to them. God shuts spotted men out of His kingdom because He knows that they can have no taste for it, no sympathy with it, no understanding or enjoyment of it; because He knows that light has no portion with darkness; because He knows that to put a man who loves spot, in with the spotless ones of Christ's kingdom, is to subject him to a misery that is worse than death. The unspotted man shrinks from the thought or the sense of spot because he knows it bars him out of the kingdom of light. He has read that vision of John on Patmos, has looked forward with him to that pure city toward which the hearts of men yearn ever; has read his words that into that city "there shall in no wise enter anything unclean

or he that maketh an abomination and a lie," and he shrinks back from the very thought of anything that will break the sympathies that bind him to the life that is clean and holy, and to the city that knows no stain. Lift up your eyes and see—

"Beyond our sight a city foursquare lieth,
Above the mists and fogs and clouds of earth,
And none but souls that Jesus purifieth,
Can taste its joys or hear its holy mirth."

And from the very thought of physical uncleanness, the clean and the spotless man shrinks back as from poison and blasphemy. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy: for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

All this we know only too well, so sadly well! But we want to know not that we are spotted, but

HOW THE SPOTS CAN BE WIPED OFF OF OUR LIVES.

As I understand the gospel, it came to do precisely this thing which the law and the ritual failed to do. The Law and the Ritual were sent to teach men to love purity and to hate spot, but when men failed to love purity and to hate spot through these teachers, God sent forth His only begotten Son, that He might teach men to be clean and make them clean. Every time He proclaimed the platform on which He was standing, He included in it a plank to this effect: that He had come to cleanse unclean men. There is not a record in all the gospels

of one leper who crossed His path whom He did not cleanse. He wished to show His intense detestation of all that is foul and spotted, and His intention to bring man back to that which His Father had intended him from the very beginning to be. Therefore the message that He proclaimed became at once a message of cleanness and of purity. "Come ye out from among them," cried Paul to the Corinthians; "Come ye out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be to you a Father, and ye shall be to me sons and daughters." And when in another epistle, he told of the purpose of Christ's coming, he did it in those matchlessly tender words, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish."

To such an extent did they carry their love of cleanliness that Paul wrote to one of his churches forbidding its members even to mention physical impurity. "Why, the very thought of it," he said, "ought to be repulsive to you. Don't let the words that frame it ever pass your lips. Jesus Christ came that He might make men clean."

And all of us know *how* Jesus Christ proposed to make men clean. In the central part of the state of Pennsylvania, on a little green hill that overlooks the

valley of the Juniata, there is a grave. I love that spot more than any other spot on earth. There is only a white stone there, with a name on it, looking ever toward the first rays of the rising sun. And underneath that name are these words:

“And the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.”

I do not know how it does it. I know it does it. I know He came that His blood might do it; might cleanse men of spot; might cleanse them of impurity; might cleanse them of all uncleanness; might make them as stainless as Himself. He cleanses men *by His blood*.

He cleanses men *by the hope of His coming*. “And now, little children,” writes John, with young men who are in the struggle in his mind, “and now little children, abide in Him, that when He shall appear, ye may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.” “Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And he that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as He is pure.” Can you cross the threshold of a polluted place; can you let a foul word pass your lips; can you let the wrong suggestion steal into your speech, when you know that at the very next moment He who shall come,

and who does not tarry, after all, so very long, may stand by your side on that threshold, or may hear those words or mark that suggestion? Let a man once conceive that by his side forever moves the present and the coming Christ, and he loses all relish for stain and uncleanness and spot.

And He cleanses men *by His Word*. "Now, ye are clean," He said to that little company the last night of His intercourse with them; "Now, ye are clean through the word that I have spoken unto you." "Wherewithal," said His great prototype, long before, "shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word."

By Christ's blood, by the hope of Christ's coming and His ever-real presence, and by the indwelling of Christ's Word are men made clean.

A good many men say at this point: "All that is perfectly familiar to us. We have passed through the sense of spot. We have passed through the sense of cleansing. What we want to know is

HOW TO KEEP CLEAN.

From time to time we have gone down through the deep waters of His purging blood, and our sins have afresh been washed away. But how can we keep ourselves clean?"

That is precisely James' point: True religion and undefiled before God is not getting cleansed once and then spotting yourselves again. Pure religion and un-

defiled is this: that a man should keep himself unspotted. How?

Well, negatively, *let a man bar the things that are unclean*. Let a man hate as the very breath of hell every spot of foulness. Let him take as a rule of his life the strong words of Jude: "Hate the very garments spotted by the flesh." So Paul advised Timothy: "Flee from the uncleanness that is common to young men. Get out of the reach of young men that are spotted by it."

This is an injunction that men do not heed. Many young men belong to fraternities that contain spotted men. Many have voted spotted men into their fraternities. Many have been officers in Young Men's Christian Associations that have knowingly admitted spotted men. Many are members of clubs which contain spotted men. Think not you can handle fire and not be burned. Think not you can handle soot and not be soiled.

I know how many men there are that have been deluded by the devil's lie that only a man who has been himself defiled can rescue spotted men. As though no doctor were fit to set a broken arm without first breaking his own! Let not the devil persuade any man that he cannot cleanse another until he has first soiled himself.

Let men hate the things that are unclean. Let men stand out and out against the things that are spotted. Let men break once and forever with the world that is anti-Christ, full of soil, and corruption, and stain,

and then they may hope to keep themselves clean.

And, positively, *let men love and cherish the things that are clean*. Let them hate on one side the things that are full of spot. Let them love on the other side the things that are spotless. Let them *think pure thoughts*. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things."

I have met men by the score who have confessed that they were spotted with wrong and low thoughts. There are men who would willingly sacrifice one hand, if by that sacrifice they might guarantee themselves forever against the thinking of another unclean thought. Are we so near to beasts; are we so strongly akin to them that we can think, forsooth, of only the beastlike things? Let men have pure thoughts.

Let them *choose clean friends*. The Apostle Paul knew perfectly well the importance of this when writing in his first epistle to young Timothy, he said:

"Oh, Timothy, choose your friends from among the pure-hearted friends of God."

Let a man choose his companions from clean men. Let him strive as God gives him grace to lift up the unclean men. Let him not run so far from them that he cannot help them into cleanness. But for the sake of his own spotlessness let him not stain himself with the corruptions that have ruined and wrecked other lives.

Let men *speaking clean and pure and wholesome words*. Let us think one moment. How many of you have this day allowed a questionable suggestion to pass your lips? How many of you have in personal intercourse this day just allowed the shady word to be said; just allowed the colored thought to be suggested? Oh, that men might be willing to speak clean, and sweet, and pure words! Those of you who have read Coleridge Pattison's life will recall that, when captain of the cricket team, his team was invited to dine with the football team of the school, and after the dinner was over, and some of the men were speaking and talking, one of them got up and began an objectionable story. Coleridge Pattison rose up at once.

"Gentlemen," he said, "if that thing does not stop, I leave this room."

He left the room and refused to go back to his place on the team until personal apologies were made.

Dr. Trumbull once told me of a similar incident in the life of General Grant. There was a slight lull in one of his campaigns, and a lot of men were sitting around in his tent. General Grant was writing. One of the men got up and said:

"I have a perfectly luscious story to tell. I believe there are no ladies here."

General Grant looked up and said quietly: "No, sir; but there are gentlemen here."

Do men lack self-respect? Do men believe they were made in the image of darkness rather than in the image

of the stainless and the crystal Christ, that they should be willing to soil speech with those things they would not be willing to say to Christ?

In these ways can a man keep himself clean. A man must do it.

Let me recall what I think were the last public words that Phillips Brooks ever spoke. It was in a consecration service at a convention of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, in Boston. He stood right down in the church, among the men, and he spoke out of that great, clean, wholesome heart of his, his last words to young men, and he chose his text from the fifty-second chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah:

“Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, ye that bear the vessels of the Lord.”

Do you suppose the Lord will hand over His clean and stainless power, His clean and stainless message, to spotted men? Paul said this to young Timothy, if I may paraphrase his words: “Timothy, if you want to be used of God, you must cleanse yourself. You must purge yourself from all unrighteousness. God calls us not into uncleanness, but unto holiness, and therefore do you shake off from you everything that is unclean, that you may be a vessel meet for the Master’s use.”

Only the clean man can hope to be trusted by God with the clean vessels of the Lord. You desire with great desire to see His face, and to become more fully His. Do you suppose you can do this and love spottedness? “Thou art all fair, my love,” He says; “thou

art all fair, my love, and there is no spot in thee."

Only the clean things can have fellowship and life in Him. An unclean man may read a good many books that he would be unwilling to have an angel's eye see. He may see in this great, weary, but lovely world of God's, many things he would not dare to speak of to others. But there are some things he will never see. He will never see that city in which John saw seven angels, clad in jewels pure and bright; that city all of whose streets are pure gold, and every one of whose gates is a pure jewel, while out from under the throne in the midst of it there comes a river of the water of life as pure as crystal; and he will never see that great company of those who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, and, clad in stainless white, stand "all radiant through and through in God's most holy sight."

Is this your sort of religion? "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this: that a man should keep himself unspotted." Let every one ask himself: "Have I that kind?" It may be that some don't like this kind of religion—they would a great deal rather have the sort that ends in intellectual assent; they would a great deal rather have the sort that consists of intermittent religious feelings. True religion is this: "That a man should keep himself unspotted." It may be some men have lost the taste for unspottedness. It may be they have tasted uncleanness so long that they have no desire any longer, no great, consuming absorbing passion for cleanness and spotlessness.

Have pity on such a man. He has rejected the pity of God.

We want to be clean. We want to have the kind of religion that means an unspotted life. Why not get it now? God cannot give to any man that which He hungers and thirsts and sent His Son to give him, unless he will cleanse his life first. If you want it cleansed, you can have it cleansed now. Go to your room, kneel down there by yourself, and pray to your Father which seeth in secret, that He give you cleansing for your sins; and that will take place in you which took place in Naaman, years and years ago, when he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, and his flesh came upon him again as it had been the flesh of a little child.

SUMMONS TO A NEW DEPARTURE.

By Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, D. D.

This is a restless world, everything is in motion. Life is not a stagnant pool, it is a swift running stream. It is not a bivouac, much less is it a swing in a hammock. It is a march, with many a stiff, sharp encounter between the cross and the crown.

But many who call themselves Christians need to be summoned to a new departure. Therefore, my trumpet message is:

“Arise, let us go hence.”

Our Savior addressed these words first to Himself and His disciples, saying: “Let us go.” They had been for one or more hours in that sacred upper chamber where He instituted the precious sacred rite, the Lord’s Supper, and uttered those marvelous words recorded in the fourteenth chapter of John. The time had come when words must give place to deeds. He says, “Hereafter I will not talk much with you,” and girding His loins and starting up from that recumbent posture at the table He calls the eleven and says:

“Let us go hence.”

He knew aright what was before Him—Gethsemane, Calvary, and the tomb. He calls them to go with Him, for He says, “As the Father gave me commandment,

even so I do. As the Father gave me commandment to carry out the great purpose of redemption, I go, and now you go with me out there to that garden. Let us go hence."

There is nothing so swift-footed as love. It is the alacrity of love that sends our blessed Master out, knowing all that is before Him. Those eleven men at that table had not been redeemed yet. What if Christ had called a halt that night and failed to go out to what was before Him? where would they, you, all of us have been? He went forth prepared to say:

"Let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, Father, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

Every man who has come to the point where he can swallow a bitter cup because he can feel the breath of Christ on it, and who can say from his heart, "Thy will, not mine, be done," has reached the highest point which he can reach.

This command of the Master: "Arise, let us go," means, first, *obedience*.

The core principle of Christianity is what? Faith? No, more than that, deeper yet than that: the core principle of practical Christianity is *obedience*,

OBEDIENCE TO JESUS CHRIST.

The core principle in the commonwealth is obedience to law; the core principle in every well-regulated family is obedience to parental authority. I am afraid there is not so much of that old filial spirit as there used to be. When a boy has learned the difference between "you

may," and "you must," that boy has the first start in genuine manhood. Obedience is the first and the great thing in this school of life in which the Master has placed us. Has not the Master said, "If ye love me keep my commandments"? It is very sweet to get a kiss or Christmas gift from a child, but what cares the mother for that if the child has no regard for her authority?

A young man studying music worked a year, and at the end of the year expected advanced studies, but he had the same lessons over again. He graduated at the end of three years to be a master of music. That is the way God teaches, the same lesson over and over again until we have mastered it and are ready to graduate into glory.

May God make you and me obedient scholars in this great school for eternity.

It was on a British vessel in the Bay of Biscay. The pilot came to the Admiral and said:

"It will be an awful night, and there is a lee shore, and the wind is rising."

The Admiral replied: "Sir, you have done your duty in pointing out the danger. Lay me alongside of the of the enemy."

When the morning broke, it saw the enemy's vessels captured or shattered to pieces.

When God calls you to duty, let prudence or timidity put in their remonstrance, but let your answer be: "Lay me right alongside of that hard task, that sacrifice, that that danger"; and the Master will go with you into the

fight. Therefore I would condense my exhortation into one sentence: Find out what Jesus Christ wants you to do, and then *do* it. That is a motto for every young man. That is the Christian life in brief.

Now, if we are going to make the progress we should, we must *get out of evil habits*.

I do not mean anything disgusting, or abominable, such as people speak of as evil habits, as drunkenness, lechery, profanity, or sins that ostracize people from decent society. I speak of propensities, sometimes of professing Christians, that are special hindrances to their usefulness: flies in the ointment, foxes in the grapevines: tendencies of speech or action that mar the beauty of holiness most sadly.

What are you going to do with the evil habit or the half-dozen? Fight them one by one; that is one way. What did you do last winter when the panes of the window were covered with frost, and you could not see out of them? Did you scratch the frost off with a knife? That would have taken too long. You heated up the room, and the frost went off the pane. Warm up the soul with the love of Christ, and the

BAD HABITS WILL RUN OFF.

That is what Chalmers calls the "expulsive power of a new affection." Bring Jesus Christ into the soul, and you will overcome the evil habits.

Then, *forsake dangerous associations*.

Health is not contagious, but sickness is. They quarantine yellow fever in New York, but they do not

bring in health or quarantine it. Sin is catching, holiness is not. Young friend, be very careful to whom you give the night-latch of your heart. Look out! Look out! Look out! Association, with us imitative creatures, has a tremendous influence on a man's or a woman's Christian character.

Lot bought real estate down near Sodom, pitched his tent over against Sodom. Then he moved into Sodom, and pretty soon Sodom moved into him. The angel put that hand on his shoulder and said:

"Escape for thy life, lest thou be consumed."

That is the only way for anyone to get out of dangerous associations, in business, in politics, or anything else. Young Christians, the moment you find you are in any associations that harm and poison your piety, escape out of that place as quickly as Lot hastened out of Sodom, for there is no safety in remaining there.

The next point is, "Come out from the world and *be ye separate*,"—that is the Master's command, and it means not only *come out*, it means *stay out*.

Some come out and then go back. Some come out and straddle the line, neither one side nor the other. Christ draws sharp lines. "He that is not with me is against me." Some church-members have their roots on one side of the church wall, and their boughs all hang over and drop the fruit on the world's side. It is not the question of where your roots are but where the boughs hang and the apples fall. In these days we want more of clear, distinct, emphatic, Christly religion, where you do not need to look into the church

roll to find out whether a man is a Christian or not.

Young people used to ask me over and over again: "May I go to this or that place of amusement?"

My answer always was: "Where you can carry Christ with you, go; where you cannot, stay away."

Where you cannot spend an evening and go home and ask the Master's blessing on that evening, no Christian has any right to be. If your heart is in the theater or in the ball room, get your heart out of it, and your feet will stay out too. I pity that Christian who has to be running after his heart into unclean places. Wherever you, as a Christian, go, and anybody says: "I did not expect to see you here," you should not be. There is

A PRACTICAL RULE

which young people may carry into all their dealings. If there is any leaning out of the perpendicular, lean toward Christ; always give Him the benefit of the doubt. That settles all these questions about card playing, dancing, theatricals, and the whole tribe of them. Christian conscience, kept sweet by prayer, listening to the voice of the Master, does not go astray. I do not believe a man on earth ever came to an emergency and asked Jesus Christ for help, and put the reins in His hands, who went astray. When we put ourselves under the guidance of that Spirit, the Spirit who is unerring and all-wise will guide us rightly.

You that have come out from the world, stay out, not only for your sake, but for the world's sake. The

worst thing that could happen to all the sinners in the country would be for the godliness of the country to become bankrupt. For the world's sake, fellow christians, let us stand like Gibraltar for Christ and truth and holiness.

But "arise, let us go hence" means not only to come out from bad habits and dangerous associations, and to come clean out from the world, but, having come out from the world, you have a vantage ground to

ELEVATE THE WORLD.

Having good footing on Christ, you can draw the world up toward Christ.

There is also the call to a higher plane of spiritual attainment. Paul was no perfectionist. He knew Paul too well for that; he knew Christ too well for that. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: . . . but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." There is Paul's theology: continual battling, continual victory, continual upward movement, continual fresh attainments.

In these days there is a great deal of lowering the standards. Business men in New York tell me that business standards have been lowered, and now a good deal of business runs into gambling. In politics the standards have been lowered. There has been a lowering of standards in theology, and in reference to the su-

preme authority of that blessed Book. We must keep the standard up to the very tiptop peak of God's flag-staff. Be careful, my brother, about lowering your standard of right, obedience, and holiness.

You remember, perhaps, that scene in the days of conflict, when a color sergeant had carried the colors so near to the enemy's redoubt that the regiment shouted to him to bring them back or they would be captured. The color sergeant said:

"No, no, bring your men up to the colors!"

With a magnificent dash they carried the colors themselves into the rampart.

The commandment of the Captain of our salvation to us ministers is: "Bring my church up to my colors, and then we will go forward and capture the enemy."

Oh, brother, never lower your standards. Never let your colors be captured. Fight up to them. This is a bugle call to anyone who has settled down into a state of inaction.

There are many Christians who seem to think: "How little can I do, and yet keep up a respectable appearance in the community and finally be saved?"

Perhaps someone says: "Well, I hope I was converted several years ago. I joined the church, I came to the sacrament, I never brought any scandal on religion, never. I lead a respectable life. If, at the last, saved by grace, I can get through the door into heaven, I shall be satisfied."

Do you think you will? No! you never will be. **NEVER!** If, by the grace of God, you are, as the say-

ing goes, "saved by the skin of your teeth," and once get inside of the pearly gates, and look up and see Paul and all the apostles and martyrs and prophets and evangelists, Luther and Calvin, and the Wesleys and Spurgeon, and all that glorious array; and not only these, but some poor, hard-working washerwoman that, at the end of a day's toil, dragged herself away to a prayer-meeting, and, at the end of the week, carried her little pile of rags to a mission school,—when you look at these, you will be so ashamed of yourself that you will ask God to let you come back and work out your salvation. Satisfied? God have mercy on anyone who is satisfied with himself or herself! May the Holy Spirit give us all a holy dissatisfaction with our condition, and a desire to rise and go forward.

The points I have made may be summed up in one phrase:

A NEW DEPARTURE.

There is not one who may not profitably make it. Some, I fear, sadly need to make it, or they may be lost. John Bunyan said: "A door I observe to hell right by the gate of heaven"; and there are people who seem to have slipped away to hell right from the communion table.

But I would say to all joyously, Arise, go hence, wherever the Master calls you. Christ might have stayed all night in that room talking sweetly with His disciples. He knew the geography of Jerusalem as you know the geography of Northfield, or your native

town. He could have taken those men out of any gate and escaped into the open country and saved Himself. He knew that down in the garden under the olive trees that hell-inspired traitor would be waiting for Him with a kiss; and Pilate's band would be there, and the prince of the powers of darkness. He knew that right beyond was the cross of Golgotha. In obedience to the great purpose of loving redemption He said: "Arise, let us go," and He went. The disciples never could have forgotten that night. I don't doubt that when times of trouble came, they thought of that, and said:

"Don't you remember that awful night when Christ bade us go out, and He also went?"

Christ never sends anyone on a mission of duty or love, but He says: "I am with you, I go with you even to the end."

That is the sweetest thought of all, that in all the hard lessons He is by us to help us in the schooling. In all the missions of difficulty or danger He accompanies us, whether it is in toil or sacrifice. So I give you this practical message: "Arise to a new departure." Arise, that means *move*,—be on the move. Start up, set foot, go hence.

Arise, go obey this Master, let Him help thee to obey.

There is a time coming, not far off, when you shall be summoned to another departure. Let it come when it will. God's time is the best. There is a time coming when it will begin to get dark, and the hearing will begin to get dull, when we shall not perhaps see the candle by the bedside; and then when the great unmapped un-

known is before us, and we go out into that eternity, instead of leaving us to drift over, the blessed Savior will come and take us by the hand, and He will not say "Go," He will say:

"Arise, let *us* go hence."

He will go with us, and open the gates, and bring us into the city, and give you and me our places where, saved by grace, we shall see the King in His beauty.

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA.

By Rev. Andrew A. Bonar, D. D.

There was a man of God in London many years ago who used to say to his people occasionally:

“Be very careful how you walk, for the world will not read the Bible, but they will read you. They will form an idea of the Master from what they see you to be.”

Now, brethren, that is one reason for taking a case like the present—a disciple—and showing you the Master through him. Joseph is to teach us to-day what is written about Him. And do you notice that each of the four evangelists speaks of Joseph? All seem eager to tell of him, and all have something good to say about him.

First of all I want you to notice his birthplace, and his station in life; second, notice his character as a man, and as a disciple; and then lastly, his place in the history of the church. Each one of these particulars is just full of instruction; but we must not do more than glance at each in turn.

First, *his birthplace*—Arimathea. Where was it? For some time it was thought to be the same as Rama, which every traveler coming upon the plain of Sharon sees. But we cannot be certain as to its absolute identity with this or that particular town. At any rate, he

was born there; and if so, how does it come to pass that he had a sepulcher in Jerusalem? The sepulcher of his fathers at Arimathea would be the natural place for him and his family to be buried. But Joseph was a rich man, and I think there can be little doubt that before his conversion he had a good deal of pride and ambition that wealth so often gives to a man. And it was the fashion among the rich people of that day to have a tomb at Jerusalem. You remember in the prophecy of Isaiah, the prophet was sent to ask Shebna, the treasurer, for whom he was hewing out the sepulcher, and why he was doing it. And I suppose just in the same way Joseph thought, "I would like to have a sepulcher, too, to perpetuate my name." There was a spot to be bought there, and Joseph bought it. God often has a plan in the lives of unconverted men which they know little of. So it was with Joseph. As we shall see, God overruled his pride and ambition in buying the tomb for His own purposes.

This much about his birthplace, and his buying the the tomb; now what was his standing in society?

Well, he must have been a rich man, since he could buy a tomb; and you remember, too, that Matthew was careful to say that he was a rich man. And then we read in another of the evangelists that he was an honorable man—a man held in honor. Now you know, dear brethren, it is written: "Not many wise, not many rich, not many noble are called"; yet the Lord always has some wise, some rich, some noble among His followers. And Joseph was taken at this season as one of this class.

Jōseph was not a fisherman; he was a man high up in society; he was of honorable position.

Here is a remarkable thing connected with his situation. When he came to Christ, and believed in Him, Christ did not tell him to give up his position in society and become a fisherman. No, Christ evidently intended him to remain where he was, as a counselor and witness for Him among those with whom he daily came in contact. You know it is far more difficult to speak to your own flesh and blood, and bear testimony for Christ, than to go to those who do not know you. We very often find when a young man is converted, he is almost always inclined at first to say:

“I shall give up my position. I know I could do far more good if I was a preacher, so I’ll leave my business and become a preacher of the gospel.”

But very often mistakes are made just in this way. God may have given you some work to do for Him in the position in which He has placed you, which no one else could do if you were to leave it undone. We should be very careful how we wish to change from whatever position in life God has seen fit to put us.

But we come secondly to speak of *Joseph’s character*, and let us notice it in this way: his character before his conversion and his character after.

I think there is little doubt when Luke says of him that “he was a good man and just,” that he is describing the man as he was naturally. The distinction between the two expressions when put together is this: A just man is a man who in society is most exact in all

the details of duty, honorable in his dealings; he pays all his debts; he won't injure anyone—that's a just man. But Joseph was at the same time a "good man"; that is to say, a kind man, a man of generous disposition. These are the two characteristics of the natural man in this case at least; it is these which make a man liked by his fellow men, so that you find in Romans v., "Scarcely for a righteous man would one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die."

Well, Joseph was all this, and yet not a Christian. A man in his natural state may be all that Joseph was, and yet be outside of the pale of salvation. But while it says Joseph was just and good, it says more—the statement does not end there. If that were all, he might be compared to the young ruler, pointing to his outward moral life for justification. But let us go on and see what else characterized the man. He was a disciple of Christ.

Here comes in a very interesting question: When and how did Joseph become a disciple of Christ? This is not recorded directly, but there is a probability in what I am going to mention.

You recollect the council of the Jews that met together in their own room, and had an animated discussion as to what they were to do with Jesus, whom the people were crowding to hear; and you remember they sent off their officers and men to apprehend Him. And on the last day, the great day of the feast, just as these men were coming forward to seize Him, He lifted up His voice and cried: "If any man thirst, let him come

unto me and drink." These and other words the officers heard; and they looked at each other, and with one consent returned to their rulers, who were sitting expecting every time the door opened to see their prisoner brought in. But lo! the soldiers walk in without Him!

"Have you not brought Him?" was the eager question.

And then, amid the breathless silence, the officers stepped forward and said:

"Never man spake like this man."

Nicodemus couldn't stand by and listen quietly any longer. Up he sprang, and said before all the council:

"Does our law judge any man before it hears him?"

The amazement of his brother councilors you may imagine, but the matter ended, and they passed out one after another, throwing glances of scorn at Nicodemus.

Joseph would likely be as much touched by what Nicodemus said as by what the Pharisees said. And as they were going out Joseph would linger behind, and then he would step up softly to Nicodemus:

"Nicodemus, you seem to know more about this man than we do; tell me of Him."

And then they would take a walk on the roof together, and talk about Him. Nicodemus would tell Joseph about the time he went by night, when Jesus said: "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God," and would remark, "I didn't know what to say, Joseph. I began to say something about how could a man be born again; and then He said that it didn't mean that at all, and all at once He hurried me

away in spirit to the desert and I saw that crowd of bitten Israelites gazing at the serpent lifted up by Moses—and then He said:

“‘Nicodemus, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’

“Oh, what a moment that was! I saw what He meant, and I was brought to look upon Him as the brazen serpent that is to heal the world of sinners; and there in His presence I learned what it was to be born again. I was in a new world. As I sat with wonder and delight at His feet, He again looked at me and said:

“‘Nicodemus, God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.’

“I never can forget those words; they have been ringing through and through me ever since, Joseph Aren’t they wonderful words?”

I can suppose that it was somewhat in this way that Joseph was introduced to the knowledge of Christ through his fellow-councilor. Joseph learned what Nicodemus learned; and they often talked together of that wonderful Savior. Joseph became a disciple; and a disciple you know is a learner. If you become His child, you will learn of Him. When Jehovah was instructing His servant Joshua concerning the conquest of Canaan, He told him he must meditate daily on His Word. And just so with us; we must ever be meditating on Christ and the work He has accomplished for us.

And then it says further concerning Joseph, that he was waiting for the kingdom of God. It is very good for a man in any position, but especially for a public man, to have his attention directed to the coming of the kingdom. There is nothing that exercises a more deadening influence on spiritual life than giving our worldly affairs, whatever they may be, the full swing—having our attention all taken up with the things of this life. But if a man has got his eyes fixed upon Jesus and His kingdom, then he will be wonderfully lifted up above the influence of such a temptation.

There is still another thing said about the good man we must not forget: "He went in boldly unto Pilate and craved the body of Jesus." In John we are told that he was a disciple secretly; but this should have been translated not as an adverb, but as a participle. Understand the matter thus: Joseph did not consent to their counsel when they decided to kill Jesus. They had met early that morning—it was not a regular, properly called meeting—and Joseph had not agreed to their decision; he protested against it. Joseph knew what his Master was come for—to bear the sins of mankind—and he would do or dare anything for Him. And so, my friends, if we are to get courage to stand up for Christ in a dark hour, we must think what He has done for us, how He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, all for our sins.

Joseph may have gone into the country out of the way, until, as we have seen, the fury of his fellow-councilors against him should have subsided. But he

doesn't go far; he feels so uneasy as to what is happening to his beloved Master. He finds it utterly impossible to endure the horrible suspense, and so he turns back. And as his steps draw near to the city, what does he see? A crowd of men and women and children surging round the mound at Calvary, and then a horrible thought strikes him. He pushes his way through the throng, and there he beholds his worst fears realized. He sees three crosses, and nailed to one in the midst the form of Him whom he had learned to love so well. Oh! how Joseph's heart would be filled to overflowing! his head bowed upon his breast in sorrow and anguish. But soon he stops in his grief to think if there is nothing he can do for his dear Master even yet, and then a thought strikes him.

"Yes," he says, "I know what to do. I will go to Pilate, since I can do no more, and ask for the body, and I will bury my Master in my own tomb."

There was no opposition to the funeral, for you must recollect that in eastern countries there is a great reverence for everything pertaining to the dead, and no one would think of interfering with funeral rites; just as a little after this, devout men carried the body of Stephen out and buried it, even after he had been stoned to death. Then Nicodemus joins Joseph, and they two—two councilors, two rich men—they two bring with them spices and fine linen, and come to the cross. They don't care who is looking at them, nor how they are scorned. And in that hour prophecy is fulfilled. They bound the napkin round His bleeding brow, and

clothed Him in the fine linen, and then they bore Him off. What a funeral! Just two mourners. Joseph and Nicodemus — two rich men, two men full of love to the Lord of glory. And so the body of our Lord, the great sin-offering, was laid in a new tomb outside the city. And then they two rolled the stone to the door of the sepulcher and departed.

That's all. Perhaps we are just a little disappointed that there is nothing more said in commendation of the act, but that is God's way. It is not all done yet. The Lord is coming back again, and I have no doubt He will confess Joseph before His Father and all the holy angels.

One more remark, and I end.

Does any one say: "I am so situated that it is exceedingly difficult for me to confess Christ, even in any way. I would risk much to do it, but I don't see how."

I don't think there is anything you could say which Joseph could not have said. Could any one have been in a more difficult situation to confess Christ than Joseph? Who is it obtains the victory over the world? Is it he who is in the midst of favorable circumstances, with nothing to draw him from the right path? "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." The more unfavorable our circumstances, the greater our joy and reward if we can stand up for our blessed Master here until the day when we shall hear Him say:

"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

DELIVERANCE FROM THE HAND OF OUR ENEMIES.

By Rev. H. W. Webb-Peploe.

That God would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.—Luke 1:74, 75.

The times when God in His infinite mercy has brought special blessings to at least a part of the human race, with the intention of that blessing extending to the whole, have always been times of special darkness and difficulty and danger and sin for mankind. This is noticeable in the times of Noah, of Moses, of David, of the deliverance from the Babylonian captivity, of the birth of Jesus, of the emperor Constantine, and of the Reformation. It was specially so at the birth of Jesus, and when Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, poured out the magnificent psalm from which my text is taken, it would have been said by any observant spiritual man:

“The whole world is utterly given over to corruption. There is, humanly speaking, no hope for the human race.”

Some of us are inclined to think that gross darkness covers the people of the present time, the darkness of skepticism, of libertinism, and of superstition. Are we

to be disheartened and think there can be no blessing, because corruption is visible on all hands? On the contrary, those are the very times when God brings His special revelations of the Christ to the world, though they may be given only to a few. He came to Moses and Joshua and David, to Zechariah and Anna and Simeon; in the days of Constantine He revealed the light and liberty of the gospel among the Romans; He came in the days of Luther; and the nineteenth century need not close without a magnificent blessing going out to a waiting people, to a willing people, throughout the length and breadth of the land. This is a Horn of Salvation. Jesus is coming, the living Jesus. Remember that salvation has come to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of God's people Israel. The words of Zechariah who sang the dying song of the old Jewish dispensation, and ushered in the glorious gospel of liberty, were meant to apply first to Israel after the flesh, and then to the boundless Israel, the Family of Faith. The words cannot refer simply to deliverance from earthly enemies, for what would such a deliverance from Rome do towards introducing any real holiness? Would Zechariah then speak about the oath given to Abraham, which is a distinctly spiritual promise? We may therefore claim this beautiful hymn as our own, since if we are Christ's, we are "Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3: 29.)

This promise is one of the most difficult for us to believe. It seems an impossibility for men in the present

life, but it is true nevertheless, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemy might serve Him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life.

What would these words mean to you if you had this experience fulfilled in your own life? If you think the realization impossible now, when will it be possible? Believe God's Word as it stands. You need not interpret God's words until their meaning is altogether changed, as some expositors do. It is a grievous blot upon Christian professors that they will not let God say what He really has said, but turn His words into something else. Take His Word as it is, and find the message it contains for you.

This thought is so wonderful that the Holy Ghost instructed Zechariah to say that it was not a mere hope, a mere promise, but it is *a covenant* and a covenant confirmed by the oath of God. He says: "To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to our father Abraham." When God deigns to make a covenant, and then to confirm it by an oath, is it not "that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong encouragement" (Heb. 6:18)? He has given us this basis to start upon. But it is not only said in God's oath, but it goes one step further when it says, "That He would grant us," that He would *give*; so it is not to be obtained by man's toil, it is by the gift of God. No wonder that St. Paul says, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." What gift? Not simply forgiveness; it refers to the

whole gift of salvation, including not merely the forgiveness of sins, but the continuance of grace throughout the whole period of trial until the final issue of the covenant, when we are made one with Christ in His own perfect inheritance in glory.

Do not say that it is all very well for others to talk about the grace of God being sufficient, but that you have to face a peculiarly painful duty. Is God Almighty in the dark about you? God knows you and your circumstances, and He says that "there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Cut off your right hand, or tear out your tongue rather than lie to God by saying:

"There is no deliverance for me, because of my peculiar position."

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If you are not glorifying God in the position you are in, get out of that position as soon as you can. If you are in the right position, remember that God is working for you and has made an oath that you being delivered out of the hand of your enemies might serve Him. "Serve," cannot be taken in any ordinary sense; it is used twenty-six times as noun and verb in the New Testament, and always refers to the spiritual service of the priests before God in the sacrifice and worship and fellowship in the temple. We are justified therefore in taking "serve" here to mean walking in fellowship with God, offering sacrifices pleasing to God, and enter-

ing into the holy place according to His holy ordinance.

WHO ARE OUR ENEMIES?

I would sum them up under the five titles of sin, the flesh, the world, the devil and death—if we make death a separate enemy from the devil. Is it true that the Horn of our Salvation, Jesus Christ, who was raised up according to the oath of God, to give us deliverance, has actually delivered us from the hand of those five enemies? He does not say that He has delivered us from the existence or *presence* of those enemies, but from their *hand*. Our enemy is not dead. He is living. What you have to do is to kill the right man—kill yourself. You died in Christ, not your enemies, but what delivered you out of their hand?

SIN.

Sin—we do not speak of sins—is an enemy; sins are but the wounds produced by the enemy that lies at the root of them all. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, and the forgiveness of sins is separate from deliverance from sin. Sin answers to Egypt in its old power over Israel. Sin holds us in bondage as a taskmaster holds his slaves. Christ gives us deliverance from the hand of our enemies exactly as God gave Israel deliverance from the hand of the Egyptians. Certain foes pursued them into the sea, but were slain. They are like your sins that pursue you day by day. God slays them and they lie dead before your eyes. Egypt as a nation remained after the Israelites were

delivered from them, but Israel could claim, after they had crossed the Red Sea, to be absolutely free from the hand of Egypt. So we go down into Christ's death, and rise on the other side, and find that our sins are slain and buried; but Sin, the great master, stands there,--where? - on the other side of the Red Sea, the death of my Lord. So says St. Paul, You are freed—justified—from sin, . . . being set free from sin. You are not only justified, but set free from the power of sin.

You ask, "How then shall I meet temptation?"

You must believe that Jesus Christ did set you free from the thralldom of sin, that old evil power that keeps one in bondage. If your old taskmaster looks, as it were, over the hedge to where you are standing on the property of your new Master, and he shakes his fist at you and says, "Come back, you dog, you are my slave," remember that you are on the new Master's land, and that there is a hedge which the old master cannot climb. Tell him so. The Lord does the keeping, you claim the position. We become slaves to God because we love Him.

You will not know what blessed liberty is if you are looking over the hedge and saying:

"My dear old master, I wish I could go back to you."

But if you love the Lord and His service, you need not fear. You will never in this life get free from the presence of sin. The old master will rise up, and terrify you. If you begin lusting after the fleshpots of Egypt you can get into bondage again quick enough, and you will find the old Egypt power as much alive as formerly. But you may be delivered from the power

of sin if you put Christ's death between you and it.

THE FLESH.

Now with regard to the *flesh*. The flesh is separate from sin, because it is a part of our very nature. Sin is a taskmaster, but the flesh is a part of our being. It is the evil principle working in every man by nature, and which makes us ready to yield to sin, the taskmaster, even if we are children of God.

You will never be free from the presence of the flesh any more than from the existence of sin. Have I been delivered from the hand of the flesh? What do we read in the eighth of Romans? "There is no condemnation now to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." What says the fifth of Galatians? "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh."

Here stands in the center of a man's being, his *Ego*, his personality, that chooses what shall be done. On the one hand is the call of the Spirit, on the other the call of the flesh. At every moment of your life "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh . . . that ye cannot do the things that ye would." I must choose, and if I choose for one moment the flesh, the balance has turned that way, and I tumble into the ditch of sin. On the other hand, if the Spirit prompts me and I obey at any moment, then my being passes over into the predominant influence of the Spirit, and I am living and walking in the Spirit, and the flesh is left out in the cold. I am delivered

from the hand of the flesh if I yield to the Holy Ghost who is drawing me, heart, and mind, and spirit, and body, over to His sphere of influence. The one deciding factor is my will. You may be delivered from the hand of the flesh by deciding for the Spirit, though the flesh is there all the time. It is done by the death of Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. We are saved from the flesh corruption that we may walk in the resurrection life; "that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of God the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life"—the Holy Ghost life.

THE WORLD.

The world comes in two separate forms, alluring or attacking. I am delivered from each by the death of Christ; but the operative power of Christ's work will only benefit me as I exercise faith. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." When the attacking world comes, like Amalek—those that should be our friends—and tries to put me out of existence, how am I to meet it? By faith. As long as the hands of Moses are held up, Amalek is beaten, and the Lord's people go free. Let the world, even your own friends and family, attack you, but the Lord is stronger than they. Jesus Christ was born "that He might deliver us from this present evil world"; the Greek is "that He might draw us out,"—out of the place of temptation.

Look at the seductive enemies like those people who tempted Israel—Moab, Ammon, and Edom. What

have we to do? "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." Offer yourselves to the Lord, and keep offering, and you will find that you are delivered out of the hand of your enemy, both the attacking enemy and the seductive enemy.

The world says: "Come and have a little dance, a little gambling, a little pleasure. We will not gamble for dollars, but let us put up a few cents on a game of whist."

What we must say is: "I am doing a great work, and I cannot go down. I am building the walls of Jerusalem."

You need not ask whether it is wrong to go to a ball or the theater. Preach Christ, live for Christ, look for Christ, and walk with Christ, and the world will very soon drop you. Faith in a living Christ will keep us from the world.

THE DEVIL.

Some think *the devil* is dead. They must have had a dose of morphine to put them into a deep sleep.

Luther is said to have had a dream that there was great commotion in hell. One of the devils came down and said to Beelzebub.

"Tidings, my Lord from earth. Luther is going to preach the doctrine of justification to morrow."

Beelzebub said: "What shall we do?"

One devil said: "I will go into the congregation, and move from soul to soul and say, 'It is all a lie, there is no devil.'"

Beelzebub answered: "You fool, every man here—"

there is a devil. He has only to look within, and see that he is there."

Another said: "I will go and say, 'There is a God, and there is a devil, but there is no hell.'"

Beelzebub replied: "You fool, every man knows there must be a hell."

A third said: "Let me go. I can deceive the whole congregation. I will say to them, 'There is a God, and He is very just and holy; there is a devil, and he is very strong and wicked; there is a hell, and it is everlasting, and very bitter; but you do not need to go there; you will have time to repent when you are dying. Do not repent to-day.'"

"You may go," said Beelzebub, "You will succeed."

The devils are saying to every one who has not entered into this life of deliverance:

"Put it off a little; it is not necessary to-day."

Thanks be to God, we are told in Hebrews ii: 14, that the Lord Jesus Christ was revealed that He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil. He came to bring to naught the power of the devil, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemy might claim to be free in the strength of the Lord Jesus Christ.

DEATH.

Lastly, what about *death*? Some men are all their lifetime in bondage for fear of death. But, though death exists, it has now no sting. Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus

Christ! In the death and resurrection of Jesus we are freed from the hands of this enemy, since our life, our true life, is hid with Christ in God.

Now, delivered from the hand of the enemy, I have one blessed privilege towards Almighty God: it is that I may serve Him, as a priest, offering to Him my service, in the place that is wholly given up to His business, being provided for by God out of His bounty and love. I am to serve in holiness and righteousness.

A Scotchman was asked about a man who was said to be very godly: "Is he as he is described, is he out and out for God?"

The answer was this: "Well, I think he is straight enough towards God, but he is a wee bit twistical towards men."

A great many Christians think they are all right on Sunday towards God, but from Monday to Saturday are very apt to play tricks towards men. Oh, for the grace that will make us live in holiness and in righteousness before Him, the great Searcher of hearts! "Walk before me," said God to Moses, "and be thou perfect, and upright." This then is to be my conduct all the days of my life,—what a glorious thought! It never ceases because it is Christ, not I, who does it all. "By the grace of God I am what I am," says St. Paul. "I work more abundantly than them all, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." God Almighty grant us grace to see that this life may be carried out from to-day, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.

ENTRANCE INTO REST.

By Rev. Andrew Murray.

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. Let us labor (give diligence), therefore, to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.—Heb. 4: 1, 11.

I wish, in the simplest way possible, to explain how a man enters into that rest; to point out the simple steps which he takes, and which are all included in the one act of surrender and faith.

The first step is to *believe heartily that there is a life in the rest of faith.*

Israel passed through two stages—two parts of God's work of redemption—God brought them *out from Egypt*, that He might bring them *into Canaan*.

This is applicable to every believer. At conversion, God brought you out of Egypt, and the same Almighty God is longing to bring you into the Canaan life. God brought the Israelites out, but they would not let Him bring them in, so they were obliged to wander for forty years in the wilderness—the type, alas, of so many Christians!

The difference between the life you have been leading and the life you wish to lead is typified in the wil-

derness and Canaan. In the wilderness there is wandering for forty years, backwards and forwards; in Canaan, perfect rest in the land that God gave them. So the wilderness life of a Christian is wandering backwards and forwards; going after the world, and coming back and repenting; led astray by temptation, and returning only to go off again; a life of ups and downs. In Canaan, on the other hand, is a life of rest, because the soul has learned to trust—"God keeps me every hour by His mighty power."

The second difference is that the one was a life of want; the other, a life of plenty. In the wilderness God graciously supplied their wants by the manna and the water from the rock. But, alas! they were not content with it, and their life was one of want and murmuring. But in Canaan God gave them vineyards they had not planted, and the old corn of the land was waiting for them; a land flowing with milk and honey; a land nourished by the rain of heaven, and which had the very care of God Himself.

Oh, I believe that there is a possibility of such a change for you, away out of that life of spiritual death, and darkness of sadness and complaining, into the land of supply of every want; where the grace of Jesus is proved sufficient every day, every hour!

The third difference is that in the wilderness there was no victory. When they tried, after they had sinned at Kadesh, to go up against their enemies, they were defeated. In Canaan they conquered every enemy: from Jericho onward, they went from victory to

victory. So God waits to give victory every day: not freedom from temptation; but in union with Christ He gives the power that can say: "I can do all things through Him that strengtheneth me"; "We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

You desire an entrance into the life of rest and victory? Then in the stillness of your heart say: "My God, I believe there is such a life prepared for me, and within my reach."

God means His people to have it.

The second step is to *confess that you have not yet* had this life. Some may have sought it; some may have never heard about it; and some may have thought at times that they had found it, but have lost it again. Let every one be honest with God. All who have never yet found it honestly say:

"Lord, up to this time I have never had it."

Some wish to glide gradually and quietly into this life of rest, but God will not have it. Your life in the wilderness has not only been one of sadness to yourself, but of sin and dishonor to God. Every deeper entrance into salvation must be by the way of conviction and confession; therefore, let every Christian be willing to confess:

"Alas! I have not glorified God by a life in the land of rest."

The third step you must take is to say, "*Thank God, that life is for me.*"

Some people continually say: "Oh, my character is so unstable; my will is naturally very weak; my temper-

ament is nervous and excitable; it is impossible for me always to live without worry, resting in God."

Beloved brother, do not say that; you say so only because you do not know what your God will do for you. Look away from self to God. The God who took Israel through the Red Sea was the God who took them through Jordan into Canaan. The God who converted you is the God who is able to give you every day this blessed life. God does not disinherit any of His children. What He gives is for everyone. God is waiting to bestow it. Glory be to His blessed name! Looking up in the very face of God, dare to say:

"This inestimable treasure is for *me*, the weakest and the unworthiest; it is for me."

The next step is to realize that *you can never grasp it by any effort of your own*; it is God who must bestow it on you.

Be very bold in saying: "It is for me." But fall down very low and say: "I cannot take it myself."

How then can you ever get it? If once God has brought you down in the consciousness of utter helplessness and self-despair, He can then draw nigh and ask you:

"Will you trust your God to work this in you?"

It is for your greatest happiness to be impotent. It is He who brought us out, who Himself must bring us in. People wonder when they hear so many sermons about faith, and such earnest pleading to believe, and they ask why it is that they cannot believe. There is but one answer: it is SELF. Self is working; self is

struggling; and you must fail. But when you come to the end of self and can only cry, "Lord, help me!" then deliverance is nigh. God will bring you into the promised rest.

In the next place *you must be willing to give up everything* for the sake of this rest.

The grace of God is very free. It is given without money and without price. But, on the other hand, every man who desires the pearl of great price must sacrifice his all to buy it. It is not enough to see the beauty, and the glory, and almost to taste the joy of this wonderful life; you must become the possessor of it.

The man had found and seen, desired and rejoiced in, the pearl of great price, but he did not have it until he gave up everything, and bought it.

Ah, friends, there is a great deal which must be given up: the world, its pleasure, its favor, its good opinion! The world rejected Jesus and cast Him out, and you must take up the position of your Lord to whom you belong, and follow with the rejected Christ. You have to give up all that is good in yourself, even your past religious life and experience and successes, and to be humbled in the dust of death. How hard it is for the minister of the gospel to give up all his wisdom, and to lay it at the feet of Jesus, to become a fool, and to say:

"Lord, I know nothing as I should know it. I have been preaching the gospel, but how little I have seen of the glory of the blessed land, and the blessed life!"

The blessed Spirit cannot teach us more effectually only because the wisdom of man prevents the light of

God from shining in. Some Christians may be holding fast some doubtful thing, not willing to surrender and leave behind the whole of the wilderness life and lust. Oh, do take this step and say:

“I am ready to give up everything to have this pearl of great price; my time, my attention, my business; I count all subordinate to this rest of God as the first thing in my life; I yield all to walk in perfect fellowship with God.”

You cannot live every day in perfect fellowship with God without giving up time to it. Hours, and days, and weeks, and months, and years are gladly given up by men and women to perfect themselves for a profession or accomplishment. Do you expect that religion is so cheap that without giving time you can find close fellowship with God? You cannot. But this pearl is worth everything. Come now, and say:

“Lord, at any cost help me, for I do want to live this life.”

If you find that there is a struggle within the heart, never mind; say to God: “Lord, I thought I was willing, but I see how much unwillingness there is.”

By God’s grace, if you will lie at His feet, you may depend upon it, deliverance will come.

Then the next step is to say, “*I do now give up myself to the holy and everlasting God, for Him to lead me into this rest.*”

My sin has been against God as David felt when he said, “Against thee, thee only, have I sinned.” It is God on the Judgment Seat, whom you will have to face.

Put yourself into the hands of the living God. God is love. God is near. God is waiting to give you His blessing. "My child," God says, "you think you are longing for rest. It is I that am longing for you, because I desire to rest in your heart as my home, as my temple."

You need your God. Yes; but your God needs you, to find the full satisfaction of His father heart. Come and say:

"I do now give up myself to Christ. I have made the choice. I deliberately say, 'Lord God, I am the purchaser of the pearl of great price. I give up everything for it. In the name of Jesus I accept that life of perfect rest.'"

The last step is to add, "And now, *I trust God to make it all real to me* in my experience. God is Jehovah, the great I AM of the everlasting future. Thirty years hence is to Him the same as now. That God gives Himself to me. Not according to my power to hold Him, but according to His almighty power of love to hold me."

Will you not trust God for the future? A thousand times you have thanked God that He has given us His Son; will you not now say: "How shall He not with Him give me *all things*, every moment of my life?"

Did God make the sun to shine so brightly, and is the light so willing to pour itself into every nook and corner where it can find entrance, and will not my God, who is love, be willing to shine into this heart of mine, from morning to night, from year's end to year's end?

You have hitherto lived in your own strength, with a little help from God, just as far as you allowed Him to help you. Will you not choose now a life in which God shall be all and in which you rest in Him for all? Are you ready to do that? Listen to God's Word:

"Take heed, and be quiet. Fear not, neither be faint-hearted."

God, through Joshua, brought Israel into the land. Your Joshua is Jesus, who washed you in His blood; your Jesus, whom you have learned to know as a precious Savior. Trust Him now afresh; say:

"My Joshua, bring me in, and I will trust Thee, and in Thee, the Father."

You may count upon it. He takes you, and the work will be done.

REPEATING THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

By Rev. Alexander Mc Kenzie, D. D.

Life is the strongest thing in the world. Life is everywhere fighting against death, and is destined to eternal triumph. The rough stone that is in the meadow cannot be left alone, but life comes to it, and a green and living moss tries to cover its deformity. If a cathedral or palace falls into decay, the ivy will climb over it, trying to cover the ruin which it has not been able to prevent. Life is everywhere.

Life is most of all in us who are living as God's children; and life is especially in you who are young—who have before you possibly many years, and who have in you the fulness and the strength of life to-day. You don't stand looking backward and thinking of death. Your situation is not that of the ancient gladiators, who turned to Caesar and uttered that cry of devotion and despair: *Te morituri salutamus*—"We who are about to die salute thee." Rather might you cry: "O Caesar, we who are about to *live* salute thee."

All the life there is, is the life of Him whom we love best—our Lord and our Redeemer. The life we now have, and all the life we can hope for, are to us the gift of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He came into the world that we might have life more abundantly.

Spiritual life is directly the gift of God. It comes to us by faith. It enters into us; we are born again; our thoughts, and purposes, and desires, and passions, and affections, are set on things above. We are brought up out of the reign of carnality, and placed under the power of an endless life. "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that if He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him even as He is."

I want to push out a little on the subject of life, and see what is to come of it. I approach this whole matter of living—of service—from Christ's side, and not from the world's side. I might present a strong plea, and ask you to give your life to the world because the world hath need of you; but I take the other side, and I ask you to live not alone in the thought that the world needs you, but that

CHRIST EMPLOYS YOU.

I might say: "The world demands our lives." I would rather say: "O Christ, Thou hast given me life. What shall I do with it?"

This is a primal principle, which we should always remember: The life of Christ in us is to be what the life of Christ was in Him.

Christ did not mean to have His life changed when He passed it over into His followers. He meant to have it just the same, in its feeling, its principle, its desire, its purpose. He shut it up, indeed, in human limitations; but we were to imbibe His character, so that

for a man to do a thing in Christ's name and in Christ's spirit was as if He did it Himself. One reason why He should say: "It is expedient that I go away," was that by His going away the Holy Spirit should come and carry over this Christ-life, not into one Jesus of Nazareth, but into ten thousand men, so that with ten thousand voices and hands the work of Christ might be advanced—so that that work should be accomplished for which He came into the world; not one shepherd going up into the mountain after one lamb, but a thousand single shepherds going up into a thousand mountains for a thousand separate lambs. This is the work which Christ gives into our hands, multiplying Himself by making us His disciples.

And it is the greatest instance of faith the world has ever seen. I am sure the world has never seen any faith like that shown by our Lord Jesus Christ: coming into the world with all His divine power and divine life, and going to the Cross that He might redeem the race, and then leaving the whole work in the hands of eleven men, who were to be multiplied into other men, and whose successes were to be His successes.

I am sure that if everything else should fail, this will hold: We cannot—we *cannot* disappoint Him. I suppose the saddest thing that ever comes in life is to be disappointed in one whom you have trusted, and whom you had a right to trust. No stranger can wound you like your friend. Nobody can hurt a father like his child. Nobody can wound the Lord Jesus like a

disciple. The wounds of the world He can bear more easily than the wounds of those He trusts; and we are held by every motive of gratitude, by every thought of love and of devotion—we are held to this—that He shall not be disappointed in the confidence He puts in us. . We can never be disappointed in Him.

There is a story of a Scotch boy who died. The minister, standing by his coffin trying to comfort the mother, said:

“Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, ‘I am the resurrection and the life.’”

“Ah, sir,” she answered; “yes—he went away believing that, and he will be sorely disappointed if he doesn’t find it so.”

Now turn the other way: Christ’s faith in us—Christ’s confidence in our word, in the sincerity of our life; and can anything be sadder than that the summing up of life should be that He who so truly trusted us shall be disappointed in us? To carry through to-day the feeling that He is disappointed in the way we lived yesterday—to carry this all the way down the years—can anything be sadder than that? So that what we are to do is to stand with our heart open for the incoming of this life, and just to let it fill us with His own spirit and His own power.

We are asked sometimes what we are to do. Perhaps the best answer is: *To do whatever the life of Christ will do in us.* If He lays His hand gently upon us, let us observe it; where He points let us follow; and the im-

pressions that are given to our prayerful and waiting hearts may be accepted as the teaching of Christ, and the movement of His life within us, to carry forward His work in the world, even as it upholds the very constitution and permanence of the world. We stand committed to this trust as Christ's disciples. And it is interesting to mark that it is not given to us as those who are to be coerced or compelled to this service: it comes to those who are rendering this service in the freedom of a great affection.

What is the one marked trait which distinguishes the life of a young man from that of an old man? Our Savior mentioned it. The great thing that marks young life is liberty. You remember that passage in which Christ said to Peter: "When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry whither thou wouldest not." The ability to go where one pleases is the distinguishing trait of youth. I can't go where I please. I am tied to my profession. You can take any one of twenty professions. It would be a mistake for me to leave the one in which I am engaged. You can go to any place in the wide world. I am mortgaged to one place, and it would be folly for me to leave it. Your habits are not formed: mine are. You have this liberty, and the question is, how it is to be used? God never owned a slave. Our Lord never had a bondman. He makes us free in order that any service we render to Him shall be rendered freely.

I. LEARN.

What, then, is the first thing we are to do? The first thing we are to do with liberty is to inform it. We are to learn—to sit down at the feet of those who are older, and let them instruct us.

My pastor, when I was a boy, and as I entered on my Christian life, gave me a piece of advice. He said:

“Get in with some old Christian, and talk with him.”

I think it is an admirable piece of advice for any young disciple, and quite as likely to hold good if the older Christian is somebody in humble life. I heard Professor Park say when I was a student: “I learned more from an old woman in an almshouse than from anybody else.” Not long ago another distinguished college man said: “I owe very much to a poor serving-woman. She came into my house to serve, but I have learned more from her than from any of my distinguished colleagues upon whose preaching I am delighted to wait.” Let us gain from the experience of others.

The most critical point of life is when we are starting out, realizing our liberty. As long as a ship is in the harbor, a boy can take care of her. Out at sea she is under the control of her captain and crew. Now, there is a class of men whose work is entirely between the harbor and the sea. It is in that difficult passage especially that the ship needs guidance; and so we find a distinct and separate class of men whose duty is to conduct a vessel safely among the shallows of the coast. The captain who should not take a pilot on board, and

thus should lose his ship, could not collect a cent of insurance. So it is with a young man—no longer tied to his mother's side, and yet not a man in the conflict of the world, with a man's strength and experience. What he needs especially is guidance. He should sit down at the feet of the elders—sit down at the feet of those who have had experience in the Christian life; and above all, sit down with the Word of God. Let us be instructed by God Himself directly, and through the lives and lips of those whom God has instructed, what seems to be a curtailment of liberty may really be its enlargement.

The second thing is

DEVOTION TO SOME ONE OBJECT.

Select some one thing, and then give yourself up to it.

"Ah," says one: "let me do anything I want to."

You will do a great deal better if you will select some one thing, and let other things contribute to that. Take one dominant thing, and make that your choice. He who hunts two hares loses both. "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." Suppose you want to go to Europe. The moment you step into the vessel, you find that the rule is submission. The passengers are required to submit to a certain restraint imposed for the good of all. Perhaps you say:

"I am not going to be restrained. I will jump off with a log, and I will swim as far as I can, and then I dare say a passing vessel will pick me up. If they try to govern me, I'll get off again, and swim a little farther,

and by-and-by in this way, without consenting to restraint, I will get to Europe."

But will you get there? Not at all. You will be drowned—or you ought to be. How can you get there? By submitting to the wills of others for a certain period. You can go on board a steamship, and the first thing that meets you is a commandment—"Thou shalt eat thy breakfast at a certain time"; and you find a great many other requirements. By consenting to them you make all those things subservient to that one choice of yours, and you get to your destination. You have entered into a compact, and soon your eyes are greeted by Fastnet Light.

All great men have understood this. They understand that we must turn from things that are agreeable and profitable, and turn to something else that is more profitable. I am not very much afraid of you regarding the choice between the right and the wrong. You have chosen the right. But I do think there is danger here: the difficulty with you is not the choice between the right and the wrong, but the choice between the good and the best. The great danger is not that we will choose whether to drown ourselves or to swim; but how we will choose between the log and the ship—whether we shall choose to do well, or "about as well as we can." There comes the great danger; and there is a wonderful saving of strength and a wonderful economy of time when once we have used our liberty wisely,—by choosing deliberately the one thing we will do, and then making everything else subservient to it.

This is what St. Paul did. You remember his proud boast to the Corinthians. He says: "Am I not free?" and then goes on to mention three cases in which he is free. "Have we no right to eat and to drink?" They had been discussing the question of eating meat offered to idols. Paul taught that it made no difference if meat had been placed before a stone image; and he says: "I have a right to eat of it, but I won't." Again he says: "I have a perfect right to be married, but I won't." And again he says: "Do you say, 'You have no right to draw your salary. You are not an ordained minister.' I am. I have seen Jesus. I am an Apostle, and I have a right to draw my salary; and having a right to take it, I won't take it."

There were many things he had a right to do; but for the sake of the greater efficiency of his work he turned from them all, and went steadily on in pursuit of his mission.

We have a beautiful instance in the life of Bishop Hannington. In his youth he was insubordinate; but finally he said:

"This won't do. I can't have a dozen different plans. What shall I do? I will do this: I will become a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ."

As soon as he had thus resolved, he made everything else give way to his one purpose. He gathered the country people, and preached to them. After awhile he needed money to promote his work. He had a beautiful horse. It was a very desirable animal, but he wanted money more than he wanted the horse; so, without tak-

ing counsel of anybody, because everybody said he was foolish, he led out his favorite, passed his hand over its slender neck, looked down into the deep brown eyes, and then went out and sold it, and took the money, and went on with his great purpose. Men might have said he was restricting his rights. Not at all. He was enlarging his rights. He turned the carriage house into a chapel, and labored among the people of his neighborhood. By-and-by there came a time when he was guided anew. He saw Africa opening before him. Giving up everything of value, he responded to the call. Didn't he like England? Yes. Didn't he like his family and friends? Certainly. But nothing must prevent him from devoting himself to the one thing he had chosen to do. It wasn't a choice between the right and the wrong, but it was between the good and the best.

James Russell Lowell tells of a Boston merchant who made up his mind that he would be a *man*. Said he to himself:

"I am not going to be controlled by the world. I am going to be just as great and good a man as ever I can."

In course of time a ship he owned with a valuable cargo became over-due. Two or three days passed, and it didn't come. A week went by and it didn't come. He began to be a little troubled. Then he awoke and said to himself:

"How is this? I am too anxious. I am staking my manhood on a ship. Have I got down to that? I'll fight the thing out."

He went and took an amount of stocks equal to the value of the cargo, and gave it away in charity. He said:

“You don’t get me that way. I am not going to sell my manhood for two or three hundred thousand dollars.”

Didn’t he value the ship? Certainly. If you ever find a man who speaks lightly of money, keep clear of him. It isn’t healthy for a man not to like money—I wish we all had it. It wasn’t wrong to like money, or to want the ship to come in; but then it wasn’t the best. He had set out to be a man, and the ship came in the way.

Now you will ask,

WHAT IS THAT ONE THING?

Our choice in life must be a cubic choice. It must have three dimensions. First, it must be *very high*—as high as I can reach with my life. Next, it must be *very broad*: covering all the powers of my life—mind, voice, hands, feet. And then it must be *very long*—run out seventy years. I can’t afford to swap horses in the middle of the stream. I can’t afford to change my choice at thirty or forty. We are to make our choice the highest, the broadest, and the longest possible. This is to be our aim: that the life of Christ in us shall be and do what the life of Christ was and did in Himself. We are so to live that our life shall repeat the life of Jesus of Nazareth. That and that only must be the choice.

Have you chosen that?

Let this be your choice at the outset of your life. Do

you so choose? What comes of it? Christ employing us--using us. I hold that if there is anything true, it is this: that when God wants a man to do a thing, and the man wants to do it, God will tell him what he wants to do.

Have you read that story told, I think, by Anna Shipton? Sitting on the strand she noticed five vessels at anchor. It was a very calm morning. The vessels were anchored here and there, and nobody seemed to be doing anything. At last one vessel seemed to have a little movement. It wanted to do something as if it was alive. The sails went up, and the anchor was raised, and the ship moved grandly into the harbor. She watched it with interest, and it was the only living thing in all the wide expanse, and wondered curiously what the name of the vessel might be. Gradually the stern of the boat came within her sight, and there she read that the name of the adventurous craft was—"The Willing Mind." If there be first a willing mind I am sure there will be a divine guidance, and divine instruction, and divine employment—Christ setting us to do the work which He Himself came into the world to do. It is truer than we think that the life of Christ is to repeat itself in us; and the world is to hear Him, and see Him, and feel Him, as it recognizes our presence and our influence.

Now, let me advance one step further. What is consecration? It is simply a consenting to let the life of Christ do what it wants to do in us. And that ought to be a joy and a delight. Think out of how many per-

plexities and doubts and uncertainties it delivers us. I remember in the height of our war, when everyone seemed at a loss to know what to do—President bewildered, Congress bewildered. In a parlor in Washington sat Admiral Farragut. Some one was speaking of the uncertainty. Said the Admiral:

“I have one great advantage in this matter. I have only to go where I am sent.”

I think when a Christian quotes that language he is taken out of all bewilderment.

I often think of an incident in the life of Leonard Woods, President of Bowdoin College. When he was in France, he was invited with others to dine with the king. They presented themselves at the palace, and entering a large room, went down to meet the king at the other end. The king met them with his accustomed courtesy, and said:

“We did not know that we were to have the pleasure of your company to-day. You did not answer our invitation.”

Leonard Woods said: “We thought the invitation of a king was to be obeyed—not answered.”

That was one of the wittiest and the readiest things ever said; and it is the Christian thing.

“Theirs not to reason why—
Theirs but to do and die.”

Or rather, “and live.”

What does the life of Christ teach us? He said: “The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost.” Again He said: “The Son of Man came not

to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." This is what the divine life is striving to do in us.

If we would be sure that we are doing the will of Christ, there must be this element in our work: a seeking to minister, and not to be ministered unto—a seeking to save the lost. Does the life of Christ in you seem to be different from what it was in Him? There is very grave reason to doubt whether it is in us at all if it is such a different thing in us—if there is no sympathy—no desire to help others—no reaching out in a sacrificial spirit with the passion of seeking and saving that which is lost. You can't take that out of the heart of Christ. He said: "I am the vine; ye are the branches." There is this peculiarity about the vine. It is of no use at all but to bear fruit. A tree gives us wood, with which we build houses. There are a hundred things you can do with a barren tree; but what can you do with a barren vine? The solitary use of the vine is to bear fruit. Our Lord says: "These things have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." And there can be no higher joy than that: to receive the sacrificial life of Christ, so that men shall drink of our life even as we drink the life of God.

Another thing that brings this matter a little closer is this: Jesus reached thus out before men knew and understood it. He came to Jerusalem, and on a Sabbath day went up to the Temple. Nobody wanted Him there. The priests were there, the services were going

on; but nobody cared for *Him*—a stranger in His Father's house. He went out from the Temple, and went through the sheepgate to the pool called Bethesda. It was supposed that the waters of this pool had wonderful virtue—that at certain times after an angel had stirred them, whoever stepped in first was healed of whatever disease he had. Jesus came and stood there. He saw one man whom nobody else seemed to care about, and looking in his face, spoke to him. He asked: "Wilt thou be made whole?"

Why, he had been a cripple more years than Jesus had been in the world! He was a cripple when the angels sang over Bethlehem. Until that blessed moment this man was a poor wretched cripple. He had found his way somehow to the pool, but as yet had failed to derive any benefit from its healing waters.

Jesus said: "Wilt thou be made whole?"

Said the poor cripple: "Sir, I have no man"—almost the saddest cry in the gospel story;—"I have no man" in all that multitude of priests, and the throng passing through the gate;—"I have no man to put me into the pool."

There was a great vacancy in that thronged city of Jerusalem. And Jesus came between—He stood where no man would stand—He stood between the mercy of God and the need of this cripple, and gave him help; and the man took up his couch, and went away to his home. He stood between; He filled this place, and gave the man to drink of His own divine power. And what came of him then? I think I should like to follow

that man's life. It was not long, I have thought, before he came back again to help others into the pool. If he was in business he closed his day half an hour earlier in order to hasten to the pool—possibly there might be some one that needed to be put in. Perhaps there came to be an institution in Jerusalem, and this man was the secretary, and the treasurer, and all the officers—whose object was to fill the place where there was “no man.” I have sometimes fancied that among the unrecorded miracles of which John speaks, there were some that were wrought because this man brought the healing mercy to needy ones. And that place remains still; and the law of the divine life,

THE LAW OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE,

is this, that every Christian is bound to stand where “no man” is—between the mercy of God and those who need it. Some one must stand between the hungry multitude and Christ with the bread; and the disciples distributed His bounty. Some one must stand between the sick man and Jesus in the house where He could heal; and four men bore the one smitten with palsy. We are to come between the water and the thirsty lips.

How do you happen to be a Christian? By what agency did you come to Christ? I presume everyone of us can say someone came between him and Christ—our father, our mother, our teacher.

Oh, that “no man”—“no man to put me into the pool.”

There is a beautiful incident in Louis Agassiz's life.

He lived in Switzerland, on the border of a lake. His father was on the other side of the lake. He had a little brother, and the two boys thought they would like to join their father. The lake was covered with ice, and they were to walk across. The mother stood at the window watching them—anxious, as mothers are—seeing them getting along very well till at length they came to a crack in the ice, perhaps a foot wide. Her heart failed her. She thought:

“That little fellow will try to step over. Louis will get over well enough, but the little fellow will fall in.”

She couldn't call to them—they were too far. What could she do? She watched him, and as she watched, Louis got down on the ice—his feet on one side of the crack, his hands on the other, just like a bridge—and his little brother crept over him to the other side. Then Louis got up, and they went on their way to their father.

Oh, brethren, the only vacancy in the world to-day is over that crack. Every other place is filled. Every bank is crowded. All the trades are crowded. There is only one vacancy. Will you get down there? “It costs something.” Will you get down? “Ah, but it is wet.” I know. Will you get down? “Well; my clothes—” Will you get down? “Well; I wasn't thinking of doing that. I was thinking—” Will you get down? “Well; somebody else might—” Will you get down? “Well; I ought to go home and—” Will you get down on the ice, and let somebody go over you?

That is what Christ did. He came down from the

throne, stretched Himself out upon the cross, and every soul that ever finds heaven goes over the cross. He was willing to get down—for one, for many.

I went once to Mount McGregor, and stood in the room where General Grant died. There on the table was a candle and its blackened wick. He blew it out with his dying breath. Will you light it, and carry it through the land? Somewhere there is a rude candlestick, and there is no candle in it. David Livingstone pressed his way into the heart of Africa, came to an African's hut, entered it sick and dying, fell upon his knees, and gave up his soul to God. On that rough box by his side a candle burned into its socket. And that candlestick is there. Have you got a spare candle? Light it, and light the dark continent.

And now, brethren, remember what the Lord Jesus Christ said. Those words are our highest authority—our divine commission. I never can read them but they strengthen my faith. Jesus was speaking to His Father. Eleven men overheard it, and one of them wrote down what He said—thus:

“Father, I pray for them. As Thou didst send me into the world, even so I send them into the world.”

“Even so”—with the same love, for the same sacrifice, by the same redemption. Brethren, kneel for a moment. Let me lay those pierced hands upon your head and ordain you with His own appointment. “Even so.” And this other word—(Jesus said strange words of promise and of hope)—He said that the works that He did we should do, “and greater works than these.”

He turns us from the miracles unto higher things which are within our reach as His disciples. He might have given to us to lay our fingers upon the benighted eyes and give them sight; to put our hands upon the crooked ankle-bones and give them strength; to speak to the sick and bring them back to health, and to summon the dead to life again. Greater works than these are yours and mine, for if you shall open the eyes of a man and he sees God—if you shall touch his ankle-bones and he walks with God—if you shall bring healing to his spirit, and he is made holy—if you shall call the dead to the life of a child of God, your greater work is done.

Brethren, there is a vacancy. "Even so." "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do." That is what life means to-day.

I happened a few years ago to be on the coast of Maine, and on an island under the British flag I found a little desolate closed chapel. I talked with an old fisherman, and when he was mourning over the desolation of Zion I asked him to get the people together and I would hold a service. Going home one day as we walked along, that old fisherman invited me into his house. There upon the wall was a little picture. It wasn't very fine; it wasn't painted by one of the Royal Academy; it was a very simple little picture: a vessel upon the rocks in a tempestuous sea, and then a boat with two boys in it going to help. The old fisherman looked at the picture, and with a tearful face said:

"That boat there—that is my boy."

And then he told me the story. He said: "That vessel went upon the rocks. They saw it, and nobody knew what to do. It was a terrible storm. The sea was very high, so that they couldn't do anything. Yet they couldn't bear to let the ship go down and the men without doing something, and they went out in that vessel you see there. They got up near, and they couldn't get any nearer. They knew no boat could live in that sea, and all they could do was just to stay there, and the vessel on the rocks was going to pieces. My boy couldn't stand it. He went to the captain and said:

"'Captain, I am going to save those men.'

"And the captain said: 'Nelson, if you try it you'll be drowned.'

"My boy says: 'Captain, I'm not thinking of being drowned. I'm thinking of saving those men.'

"One of the men said: 'I'll go with you.'

"They went, and they saved every one of the men in the wreck. And my boy said to me after he got back:

"'Father, it seemed to me as if the waves were smoother near us than they were everywhere around.'

"I said: 'Nelson, my boy; that is God.'

This is the word I want to close with. If you are thinking of being "drowned," why, "drowned" you will be; but if you are thinking of "saving those men," saved those men will be.

What is your resolution? The life that is in us is the life of Christ. Let it do as He will. Oh, Thou Christ; Thy will be done! Let us go out to seek and to save that which is lost.

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S RELATION TO THE CHURCH AND TO THE WORLD.

By the late A. J. Gordon, D. D.

I desire to present, first, The Holy Spirit in relation to the church, and, second, The Holy Spirit in relation to the world.

1. A remarkable expression is found in John 7:39. Jesus had just said: "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Then it is added: "But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified."

It reads exactly: "The Holy Ghost was not yet." Had not the Spirit been in the world before this?

Turn a moment to consider Jesus Christ. Many lives of Christ have been written, but with one or two exceptions they all begin at Bethlehem and end at Olivet. Yet was not Jesus Christ in the world before He was born at Bethlehem? Yes, He was "in the beginning with God: all things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made"; and it is believed that He appeared also to prophets and patriarchs in the Old Testament dispensation; and we know that after He ascended from Olivet He lived on and will

continue to live. Why, then, shut up the life of Christ between Bethlehem and Olivet? Because those represent the limits of His temporal mission, His earthly ministry.

Exactly so the Holy Ghost had been in the world before, acting in creation and inspiring the prophets. Christ had been begotten by the Holy Ghost, and when He was baptized in the Jordan the Holy Spirit as a dove descended and rested upon Him. How, then, could it be said that the "Holy Ghost was not yet," because Jesus Christ had not been glorified? As Jesus Christ had an earthly mission that began at Bethlehem and ended at Olivet, so the Holy Ghost in His turn has a definite temporal ministry or age-mission that began at Pentecost, and I believe closes at the second advent of Christ. As the cradle of Bethlehem contained the infant Jesus, so the upper room was the cradle of the infant church. The one was the birthplace of the Head, the other was the birthplace of the body; so that Augustine very rightly calls Pentecost the "*dies natalis*," the birthday of the Holy Ghost. Then He entered upon His temporal ministry.

What does He do after He comes down?

When Christ ascended the Holy Ghost descended. "If I go away I will send Him unto you." When Christ took His place on God's right hand, His seat in the heavens, then the Holy Ghost took His place in the church, where henceforth He dwells; and as truly as Christ's abiding place is in heaven, through all this dispensation the Holy Ghost's abiding place is

in the church. The first thing, therefore, that He does when He comes down is *to begin to gather the church.*

Up to this time the church, the body of Christ, did not exist. How is the church formed? In many theological treatises the definition of the church is: "A body of believers voluntarily associated together for the purpose of worship and edification." As well say that my body is a voluntary association of hands, and feet, and ears, and eyes, associated for the purpose of work and locomotion. The fact is that as my body was formed out of a germ, and all stands together in the head, so the church is formed out of Christ. As Eve was taken out of Adam, so the church, the bride of Christ, is taken out of Christ, and when He arises and ascends to the Father, then the Holy Ghost comes down, and as the Word is preached He begins to gather about Himself those who are to constitute the church of Christ.

It is very instructive to notice at this point the "additions" named in the Acts of the Apostles. As soon as Peter had finished his sermon, "they that gladly received His Word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." The words, "unto them" do not belong there. All it says is that they were "added." The translators could not conceive of addition without adding to something, so they put in "*unto them.*" At the end of the chapter we read again: "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." But those words "*to the church,*" do not belong there; all that is said is that believers were "added." If we are desirous to know to

what they were added read a little further (Acts 5:14): "And believers were the more *added to the Lord*, multitudes both of men and women." And in Acts 11:24, "And much people was added *unto the Lord*."

Ah! that is it. If you put a slip down into the earth, there will be an addition of branch after branch growing out of it. Jesus Christ came down in the person of the Holy Ghost to constitute the center for the church, and as soon as believers were regenerated they became added to Him. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," said Jesus. We gather about Him and out of Him, and the church is simply the body of Christ.

Not only that, but it takes the same name.

Have you ever thought of that very significant remark of James in Acts 15: "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people *for His name*"?

If the church is the bride of Christ, the bride must have the same name as her Bridegroom. If the church is the body of Christ, she must have the same name as her Head. It would be strange if my head and my body should bear different names. In some comments on the passage, "The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch," it is held that this name was given in derision. I think not. If you study the uses of the Greek word translated "called," you will conclude they were *divinely called* Christians. God gave them that name. James speaks about rich men oppressing you and blaspheming that "beautiful name by which you

are called." Christ is the head, and the body bears the same name. In I Corinthians 12: 12, we read: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." Paul is speaking about the church

What solemn and high signification there is in this fact that we, if we are truly regenerate, bear our Lord's name, "The Christ." One Christ in heaven, another Christ on earth; one the Head, the other the body.

This, then, is what the Holy Ghost is doing in this dispensation. He is simply embodying Himself. Just as Christ became incarnate at His birth, so the Holy Ghost now incarnates Himself in the church, the body of the faithful; and this gathering out will go on until "we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." That is, when the body is complete; then it will be caught up to meet the Head, and the two will be glorified.

What responsibility this puts upon us! Nothing is more dishonoring to Jesus Christ than a church that is apostate and worldly and unconsecrated.

A man died some years ago, a very eminent literary man, who had a magnificent head, lofty-browed and intellectual, but by a sad misfortune he had that head upon a crippled body. He was a dwarf, a hunchback, and you could not look upon him without pity.

"What a splendid head," you would say, "but alas that it rests upon such an unsightly form."

Shall Jesus Christ be so dishonored that He shall

have a body unsanctified and misshapen, concerning which the angels might exclaim:

“Alas! what a noble Head, but what an ignoble body!”

It becomes us, therefore, as the body of Christ, to understand our destiny, that we are “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, to show forth the virtues of Him that hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.” If Christ has any glory in this world, He must have it through the church. The church represents Christ on earth, as He represents it in heaven. After the Holy Ghost has gathered this body, I need not say what all Scripture says, that He inspires it. Henceforth we “live in the Spirit,” we “pray in the Spirit,” we are “led by the Spirit”; everything within the sphere of the body of Christ is under the guidance of the Spirit, which is now the Administrator of the church.

II. THE RELATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO THE WORLD.

Jesus Christ gives us this relation in a remarkable passage (John 16: 8-11). “And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.”

I think the impression is quite general that the Holy Ghost, since He came, is in all the world convincing everybody, the evangelized and the unevangelized alike. I do not think this is taught. What does Jesus in this connection? “Whom the world can not receive, be-

cause it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him." Mark that passage, and put with it this: "If I go away I will send Him *to you*." Put this with: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

He sends the Spirit *to* the church to bear witness of Christ in order to bring conviction *to* the world. Jesus Christ has three stages in the work of redemption, and three offices: First, as prophet, second, as priest, and, third, as king. The Holy Ghost is to take the things of Christ and show them unto us, and He has a threefold conviction corresponding to these offices: He convinces, first, concerning Christ who was crucified; secondly concerning Christ who has been glorified; thirdly, concerning Christ who is to come again and judge the world.

1. "*He shall convince the world of sin.*"

What is the need of the Holy Spirit coming to convince the world of sin? I have often heard it said that there was no real conviction of sin among men until the Holy Ghost came. I think that missionaries will say that that is not true, that a heathen who never heard of Christ may and does have a tremendous conviction of sin. Notice that God gave conscience first, and gave the Comforter afterward. Conscience bears witness to the law, the Comforter bears witness to Christ. Conscience brings legal conviction, the Comforter brings evangelical conviction. Conscience brings conviction unto condemnation, and the Comforter brings conviction unto justification.

"He shall convince the world of sin, *because they believe not in me.*" That is the special sin about which

He convinces. It does not say that He convinces men of sin because they have stolen or lied or committed adultery; but because they have not believed on Jesus Christ. The coming of the Son of God into the world made a sin possible that was not possible before. Light reveals darkness; it takes whiteness to bring conviction concerning blackness. There are negroes in Central Africa who never dreamed they were black until they saw the face of a white man; and there are many people in this world that never knew they were sinful until they saw the face of Jesus Christ in all its whiteness and purity.

Jesus Christ now stands between us and the law. He has fulfilled the law for us. He has settled all demands of the law, and now whatever claim it had upon us has been transferred to Him, so that it is no longer the *sin* question, but the *Son* question, that confronts us. Therefore, the first thing Peter considers when he begins to preach after the Holy Ghost has been sent down is the crucifixion of Christ:

“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”

He does not say a word about any other kind of sin. This subject runs all through Peter's preaching; and as he spoke the Holy Ghost came down and convicted men, and they cried out:

“What we shall do?”

We did not have any part in crucifying Christ; therefore what is our sin? It is the same sin in another form. They were convicted because they crucified

Christ; we are convicted because we have not believed on Christ crucified. They were convicted because they had despised and rejected God's Son. The Holy Ghost convicts us because we have not believed in the despised and rejected One. It is really the same sin in both cases—

THE SIN OF UNBELIEF IN CHRIST.

2. *"Of righteousness because I go to my Father and ye see me no more."*

For many years I have been perplexed at that expression, but the other day its meaning seemed to come to me in a flash. Remember that when the high priest went in within the veil the congregation of Israel stood without, and they could not know that they were accepted of God until the high priest came forth and lifted up his hands in blessing; not only that, but they constantly feared, when they had been particularly sinful, that God would slay the high priest in the holiest of all, when he went in on the great day of the atonement. That is the reason why he wore the bells, so that they could hear the tinkling of them as he moved about, and know that he was alive. In the same way, after Jesus Christ had offered the blood He passed within the veil. See Him on Olivet rising slowly into the heavens, and as the veil closed in upon the high priest as he went into the holiest of all, so a cloud shut in between Jesus Christ and the wondering disciples, and received Him out of sight. If that were all, we should not know until Jesus Christ returns again whether we were accepted of God;

but He does not make us wait all those years to know whether we are accepted—He sends the Holy Ghost to tell us. “He shall convince the world of righteousness.” Jesus Christ is only declared to be righteous as He sits down at God’s right hand on the throne.

That is God’s way of showing us He is righteous. He went to the cross under the contempt and blasphemy and indignation and hatred that were poured on Him; and He went thence down into an ignominious grave. Suppose He had stayed in the grave. Oh, you who talk about that “lone Syrian grave,” what if the Lord had remained in that grave! Listen: “If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.” Our case is absolutely hopeless if Jesus Christ did not come out of that grave. But God raised Him up and took Him into heaven, and said: “Sit Thou on my right hand”; and all the angels see Him sitting there. Thus, by a divine act, God vindicated Him. Christ accepted of the Father is the ground of our acceptance. Therefore listen to Isaiah’s passion psalm: “By His knowledge (that is, by knowing Him) shall my righteous servant justify many.” God brought Him from the cross, where He had been despised and rejected, and now He is upon the throne. The fact that Jesus Christ is there settles the whole question. The law has not a single accusation to bring. Satan, the accuser of the brethren, has his mouth shut when Jesus Christ is on the throne.

How can we know that He is there and that God has accepted Him, since He is out of sight, until He comes

again? The answer, I think, is in these wonderful words: "Of righteousness, because I go to the Father and ye see me no more." "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He has shed forth this, which ye see and hear." The fact that the Holy Ghost has come down is a proof that Christ is there, since He said that when He reached heaven, He would send the Holy Spirit to us. If your husband is going to England to-morrow and says: "As soon as I reach Liverpool I will write you," when you get a letter from him you know he has arrived. So when the Holy Ghost came down to that upper chamber they knew that Jesus Christ had arrived in heaven. But how do we know it? Acts 5: 30-32 gives you a key to the whole question:

"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him."

Why does Christ want two witnesses? The disciples could testify as far as they knew. They could testify that they had seen Him crucified, that He was buried and rose again, and that they had seen Him go into heaven; but there their testimony ended. We want to know that He is at God's right hand. So the Holy Ghost came down and said;

"I was in heaven when He took His seat. I saw Him crowned there. I saw the angels veil their faces before Him. I saw God giving Him His sublime benediction: 'This is My beloved Son.'"

When the Holy Ghost had seen it He came down to tell us that Jesus Christ was there, so we now have two witnesses, the disciples and the Holy Ghost.

Now, remember, what Jesus said in John 15: 26, 27, when He was going away: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me; *and ye also shall bear witness*, because ye have been with me from the beginning."

Here are the two witnesses: the Holy Ghost is to bear witness, and the disciples were to bear witness. They were to tell what they knew, and He was to tell what He alone knew. How wonderfully Scripture harmonizes! Turn to Hebrews 10: 14. "For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. *And the Holy Ghost also beareth witness to us.*" Jesus Christ has been made perfectly acceptable to God by one offering—all settled, completed, accomplished. How do we know it? The Spirit came from heaven to attest this fact.

Now you see what is meant by these words: "Of righteousness, because I go to my Father and ye see me no more,"—the Holy Spirit coming to bear witness of my endorsement, my acceptance with the Father, of my being seated at His right hand. Whenever there is any question about our salvation, there is our appeal. Paul

says: "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." If He is there, then I know where I stand. Where the Surety is seated there I am seated, because I am in Him, because I am a member of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones,—

"So near, so very near to God,
I can not nearer be,
For, in the person of His Son,
I am as near as He."

Yet Jesus once said that after His departure they should still see Him. "Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more; but *ye see me*." How can that be? When the sun goes down, our hemisphere does not see him any more, but the moon sees him all night long while we see him not, and the moon takes the sun's light and throws it down upon us. When the Sun of Righteousness set behind the hill of Olivet the world saw Him no more. But the church, because it is seated in heavenly places in Christ, all the night long sees the Sun and throws the light upon the world through the Holy Ghost. The world received what light it has from the church, and the church receives its light from Jesus Christ.

3. We come to the third point—*conviction of judgment*.

I wonder how many of you have heard people pray that the Holy Ghost would convince of sin, and of righteousness, and of "*judgment to come*"? But that is not in the text. What is the judgment of which the

Spirit convinces? We are talking here of evangelical conviction. The famous English theologian, Andrew Fuller, said:

"The truths of the gospel are like chain shot; they are all linked together, and when you send one into the mind the others are sure to follow."

Here are the three links, conviction of sin, conviction of righteousness, and conviction of judgment; and you can not pull them apart. When the Holy Ghost convicts a man of sin, does He then convince him of righteousness and justify him in order that he may stand in fear and trembling concerning a future judgment? No! *"Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."* Satan is simply nonsuited and ruled out of court. The whole question of condemnation is settled.

Is not that what Jesus taught when He said: "He that believeth on me is not condemned, but is passed out of death into life, and shall not come unto judgment"? Why, then, does the Holy Ghost convince of judgment? Because Jesus Christ on the cross judged sin and became the death of death. As Philip Henry said: "Death stung himself to death when he stung Christ." He came "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Nay, friends, it is not a judgment to come of which the Spirit convicts. There is another threefold conviction recorded in Scripture: Paul reasoned with Felix, of righteousness, of temperance, and of judgment to come; what was the consequence? Was Felix justified? No, "Felix trembled." That was the conviction of conscience,

not conviction of the Holy Ghost. He was under the law and not under grace,—Felix trembled!

It is a remarkable fact that you have the witness of the Spirit and the witness of conscience both described in the Epistle to the Romans. Paul says (Rom. viii: 16) that the Spirit co-witnesseth with our spirits that we are the sons of God. That is, the Spirit bears witness that we are the sons of God and therefore without condemnation, and standing as the Son of God stands, in Him complete. That is the witness of the Spirit to the Christian.

Turn now to Romans 2: 15, and you read about the heathen. They have not the Holy Ghost, but conscience: “which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also co-witnessing, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another.”

How remarkable that is! Conscience can *accuse* a man, conscience can *excuse* a man—but conscience can not *justify* him. Here is

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CONSCIENCE AND

THE HOLY GHOST.

The Holy Ghost beareth witness in order that He may justify us, give us confidence and boldness of access as we come into the presence of God. Oh, it is a great thought that for us judgment is passed, that we are not to stand before the great white throne on the sin question, though we are to be judged for our works: that instead of being culprits there we shall sit on the judges' bench. “The saints shall judge the world.” It makes

a great deal of difference whether you are on the bench or in the dock. Jesus Christ puts us not in the culprit's box but on the throne: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne."

Conscience convicts of sin committed, of righteousness impossible, and of judgment impending. The Comforter convicts of sin committed, of righteousness imputed, and of judgment past. If we are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost has been sent to convince us of judgment, not that we may look forward to it with fear and trembling, but that we may look back on it with exultation, saying:

"When Jesus Christ died on the cross I died with Him. The law can not touch me. I am dead to the law through Jesus Christ."

Now, return to the relation of the Holy Spirit to us as believers. Christ sends us into all the world to preach the gospel: and I believe that every time we preach the Holy Ghost is present to bring home the message to men's hearts. I confess that I am not sure that if I preach on politics, on the tariff, or on the strikes, I have a pledge that the Holy Ghost will bear witness to that teaching. These may be important matters, but the Spirit has been given to bear testimony to Jesus Christ. I have not the sense of His presence in handling these themes, if I ever venture on them; but I often do have when preaching Christ, even in the simplest way—the Holy Ghost co-witnessing and bearing the message home to the hearts and consciences of men.

Now, let me say three things. First, we want more

to apprehend that for which we have been apprehended. The blind man doesn't need more light but more eyes, the deaf man does not need more sound but more hearing; and the Christian does not need more of the Spirit but more of the inspiration, (that is, the inbreathing), of the Spirit.

Suppose I go to a man who is sick with the pneumonia, and the nurse says:

"Oh, sir, he needs more air."

"But the windows are all wide open, my dear woman; he has all the air there is. Do you not see that it is not more air that he wants, but more lungs?"

Now, the Spirit is "*spiritus*," the breath of God, the breath of Jesus Christ; and the church is the lungs of Jesus Christ, (if I may say it) and you and I are the cells in those lungs, and if the lungs get closed up, you will have a consumptive church, an asthmatic church, a church that is full of weakness and failure, simply because it does not take in more of the Spirit. It is not that you need more of the Holy Ghost, but the Holy Ghost needs more of you.

Secondly, we should abandon the idea that we are to use the Holy Ghost, and accept the thought that the Holy Ghost is to use us. There is a wide distinction between these two conceptions.

I was in the Chicago World's Fair, and was attracted to a man dressed up in a very gaudy Oriental costume, who was turning with all his might a crank which was attached to a pump from which a great stream of water was pouring out.

I said: "That man is working hard and producing splendid results."

I came near and to my astonishment found that the man, who was really only wooden, was not turning the crank, but the crank was turning him, and instead of his making that stream of water go, it was making him go.

Many people want to know the secret of power! They hear about Peter preaching that wonderful sermon, and of course they would give anything if they had the ability to preach one sermon and to convert three thousand people. They say to Peter:

"How did you get hold of the power?"

"I did not get hold of the power at all," he would say; "the power got hold of me." "We have preached the gospel unto you *with*"—no, not "with"—if it had been translated correctly, we should learn that instead of Peter using the Spirit, the Spirit uses him; "We have preached the gospel unto you *in* the power of the Holy Ghost."

As a wheel dips itself into the river and makes all the cotton factories whirl, so Peter dipped into the Spirit and was swept by the current.

Then, we talk about being "filled with the Spirit," yet Paul goes beyond that in Ephesians 3: 14. He says, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . ; that ye being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be—filled

with?"—no,—“that ye might be *filled into* all the fullness of God.”

Do you not see the difference? Here are empty vessels. You say, “First get yourself empty and then full.” I may dip out of the ocean and slowly fill these vessels, but put an empty vessel into the ocean and it quickly fills itself. This seems to be Paul’s thought.

Archbishop Leighton makes a beautiful comment on the words of Christ: “Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” The Archbishop lifting up his eyes to heaven said: “Lord Jesus, it is only a little joy that now enters into us, but by-and-by we shall enter into joy as vessels put into a sea of happiness.”

Cast yourself into the great deeps of the Spirit, then there will be no trouble of getting filled.

We are baptized into the Holy Ghost; we are to walk in the Spirit; we are to pray in the Spirit; and we are to live in the Spirit. More and more what I am teaching becomes the reality of my Christian life; I believe in the Holy Ghost, I believe that He is in the church in living power. If you will only let Him, He will do things of which you hardly dream, in the management of the church and the raising of funds, but most especially in the preaching of the gospel. Think of how many things Christ promised: the Spirit was to show us things to come; to bring all things to our remembrance, and in the epistle to the Romans He has promised to help our infirmities. There is nothing we need that He has not promised to do for us; and His help is to me the most real experience. When we yield our-

selves up to Him sometimes there comes into one's soul just such a suggestion that could not have come from anywhere else except from God through the Holy Ghost.

I give you one illustration. I was preaching one Sunday in my church and it occurred to me to illustrate what I was saying by an anecdote which I had read long ago, and had quite forgotten until I went into the church that morning. I said:

"Now, sinner, you have been saying in your heart, 'Oh preacher, you have been urging me to believe in order to be saved, but I cannot believe; you have told me to accept Christ, I cannot accept Him; my faith is so lame, my hands are so weak, that I can not take hold.'"

I continued: "If that is so, just tell Jesus that you can not take hold of Him, and He will take hold of you," and this story came into my mind:—

Prof. Blaikie of Edinburgh called upon a student to recite. The student held his book before him in his left hand. The professor said:

"Take your book in your right hand."

He blushed and stammered, and went on reading, and the professor thundered at him:

"Young man, don't you know manners? Take your book in your right hand."

Then the young man lifted up the stump of his right hand and said: "I have no right hand, Professor."

The class was greatly moved, and the professor came and put his arms around that young man and begged his pardon.

"So," I said, "if you can not take hold of Jesus

Christ, He will take hold of you and lift you up."

I finished, and a young man in the audience rose, and lifted up the stump of his arm and said:

"I am that very young man."

I brought him into the pulpit, and with the mutilated right arm he enforced all I had been saying.

How did that illustration happen to flash into my mind that morning? The impression of the truth and force of what I had been saying about being taken hold of when we can not take hold, was tremendous.

May the Holy Spirit help us to understand the Holy Spirit! May He so strengthen us with all might in the inner man that we shall learn that our strength is made perfect in weakness, our sovereignty is made victorious in surrender! Let us yield ourselves unto God the Holy Ghost, and our members instruments of righteousness unto God.

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